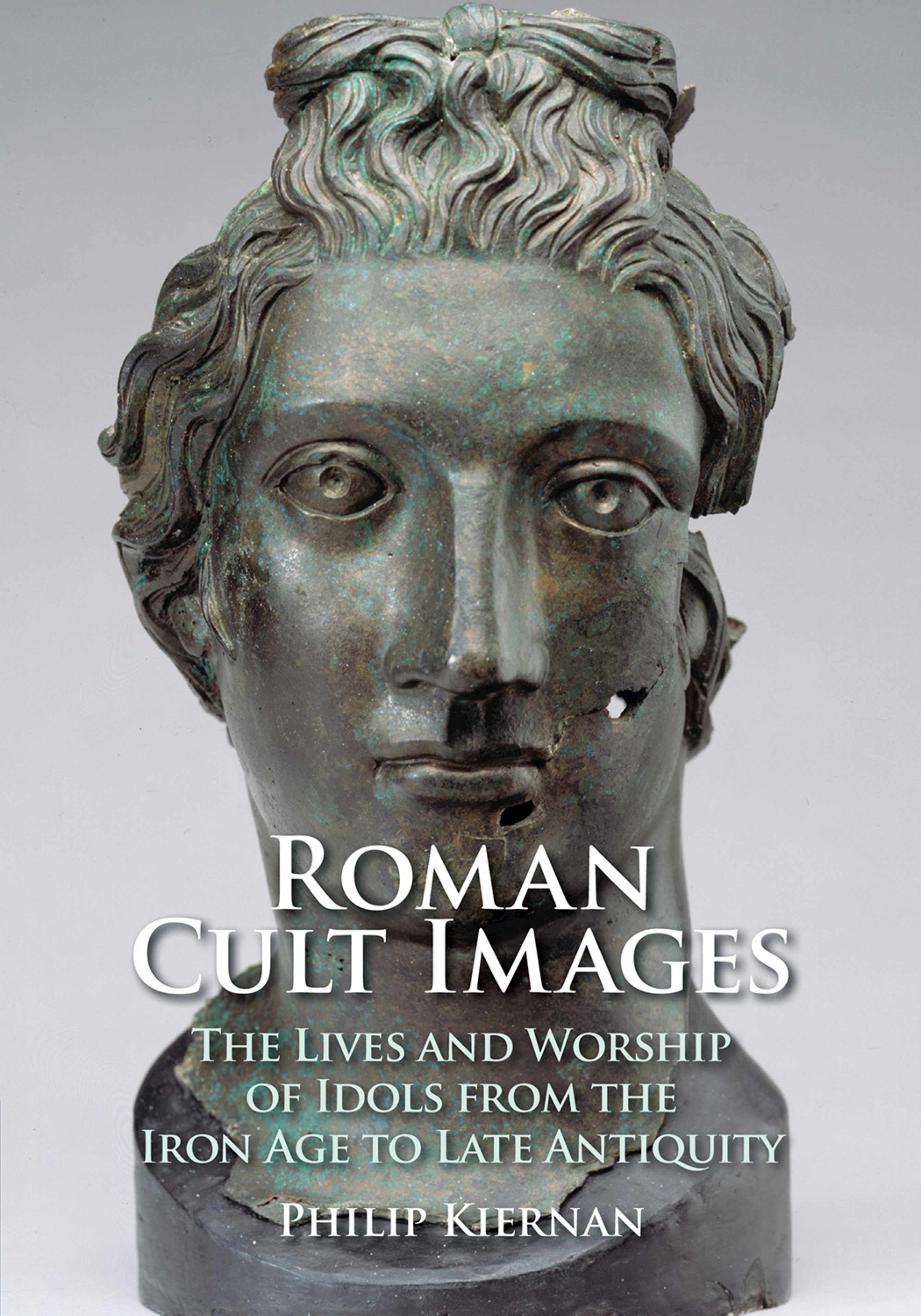

ROMAN CULT IMAGES

THE LIVES AND WORSHIP OF IDOLS FROM THE IRON AGE TO LATE ANTIQUITY

PHILIP KIERNAN

ROMAN CULT IMAGES

In this book, Philip Kiernan explores how cult images functioned in Roman temples from the Iron Age to Late Antiquity in the Roman West. He demonstrates how and why a temple's idols were more important to ritual than other images, such as votive offerings and decorative sculpture. These idols were seen by many to be divine and possessed of agency. They were, thus, the primary focus of worship. Aided by cross-cultural comparative material, Kiernan's study brings a biographical approach to explore the "lives" of idols and cult images – how they were created, housed in temples, used and worshipped, and eventually destroyed or buried. He also shows how the status of cult images could change, how new idols and other cult images were being continuously created, and how, in each phase of their lives, we find evidence for the significant power of idols.

Philip Kiernan is Associate Professor of Art History at Kennesaw State University. He is the author of *Miniature Votive Offerings* (2009) and has also published numerous articles on Roman art, artefacts, numismatics, and religion. His archaeological excavations have included a Hellenistic-Roman market building at Alexandria Troas, a Bronze–Iron Age tumulus at Haßloch, and most recently a Romano-Celtic temple at Wareswald.

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ABBREVIATIONS

LEXICA, CORPORA, ENCYCLOPEDIA ETC.

The abbreviations below have been used, generally following the pattern:

> [abbreviation] [volume].[section]:[pages], [catalogue no./plate] ([author of entry], [date])

In works where entries are headed by a keyword or term, it is given following *s.v. – sub verbo.*

AASS	*Acta Sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur. Septembris tomus quartus.* Edited by J. Stultingo, C. Suyskeno, and J. Periero. New edition. Paris, 1868.
CAG	*Carte archéologique de la Gaule.* Edited by M. Provost, 1988–2013. 95 vols. Paris.
CBIFR	*Corpus der griechischen und lateinischen Beneficiarier-Inschriften des römischen Reiches.* Forschungen und Berichte zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte in Baden-Württemberg 40: Der römische Weihebezirk von Osterburken I. By E. Schallmayer, K. Eibl, J. Ott, G. Preuss, and E. Wittkopf, Stuttgart. 1990.
CIL	*Corpus inscriptionum latinarum*, Königlich Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Berlin 1893–
Clemens	Clemens, C., 1928. *Fontes Historiae Religionis Germanicae.* Fontes Historiae Religionum ex Auctoribus Graecis et Latinis Collectos 3. Berlin.
CSIR	*Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani,* 1963– (cited by name of volume's editor, found in the bibliography)
EDCS	Epigraphik-Datenbank Clauss – Slaby: www.manfredclauss.de
Espérandieu	Espérandieu, E., *1908–1938. Recueil général des bas-reliefs, statues et bustes de la Gaule romaine.* 11 vols. Paris.
HD	Epigraphic Database Heidelberg: http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/home
ILS	Dessau, H., 1892–1916. *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae.* 3 vols. Berlin.
Labbé and Cossart	Labbé, P. and G. Cossart, 1671–72. *Sacrosancta Concila.* 18 vols. Paris.
LIMC	*Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae.* 8 vols. Zurich, Munich and Dusseldorf. 1981–99.

LTUR	*Lexicon topographicum urbis romae.* Edited by E.M. Steinby, 6 vols. Rome, 1993.
MGH	*Monumenta Germaniae Historica,* 1826– SRM – *Scriptorum Rerum Merovingicarum. Passiones Vitaeque Sanctorum Aevi Merovingici* AA – *Auctories Antiquissimi* Conc. – *Concilia*
Migne	Migne, J.-P. ed., 1841–55. *Patrologia Latina.* 217 vols. Paris.
ORL	*Der obergermanisch-raetische Limes des Roemerreiches.* Edited by E. Fabricius, F. Hettner and O. von Sarwey. 15 vols. 1894–1937.
RE	*Real-Encyplopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft.* Edited by A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll. Stuttgart, 1893–1978.
RIB	*The Roman Inscriptions of Britain.* By R. G. Collingwood and R. P. Wright. Oxford, 1965.
RGA	*Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde.* 2nd edition. Edited by H. Beck, H. Steuer, R. Müller, and D. Geuenich. Berlin, 1969–2008.
Roscher, *Lex.*	Roscher, W. H., 1884–1937. *Ausführliches Lexicon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie.* 6 vols. Leipzig.
RRC	*Roman Republican Coins.* By M. Crawford, Cambridge, 1974.
ThesCRA	*Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum,* J. Paul Getty Museum, 8 vols. Los Angeles, 2005–14.
Zwicker	Zwicker, J., 1934–36. *Fontes historiae religionis Celticae. Fontes historiae religionum ex auctoribus Graecis et Latinis collectos,* vols. 5.1–3. Berlin.

ONE

INTRODUCTION

Idols and Other Cult Images

> *Ceterum et plateae et forum et balneae et stabula et ipsae domus nostrae sine idolis omnino non sunt: totum saeculum satanas et angeli eius repleverunt.*
>
> Why, even the streets and the market-place, and the baths, and the taverns, and our very dwelling places, are not altogether free from idols. Satan and his angels have filled the whole world.[1]

Images of pagan divinities, which Tertullian terms here idols (*idola*), were omnipresent in the Roman world, and the archaeological record more than confirms Tertullian's statement. The world's museums preserve many thousands of representations of gods and goddesses from the Roman Empire, which in turn provide some of our most salient evidence for ancient myth and religion. These representations include statues and other objects that once sat at the very heart of Roman temples, and were not just decorative, but were worshiped as divine things. These objects were idols. The concept is so difficult for the modern Western mind to grasp, and so fraught with controversy, that it has proved remarkably easy for the scholarship of ancient art and religion to ignore. But the Romans saw their gods and communicated with them by means of images and objects, and it was primarily for this reason that the early church fathers like Tertullian and later Christian holy men fought so hard against them.

This book considers the topic of cult images and idols in Roman temples as a religious and archaeological phenomenon. It looks at idols and other cult images in their original temple contexts, treating them as objects endowed with social agency and possessing biographies, and not just as artworks to be classified by stylistic attributes and interpreted for their iconography. The focus is on Western Europe in the imperial period, a large part of the Roman world that is curiously neglected in many studies of Roman religion. The book is also structured like a biography, with three main parts, on the birth, life, and death of cult images. Chapters 2 and 3 address the births of cult images, including their iconographies, and explore how cult images found their forms. Chapters 4 and 5 consider the functional lives of idols, starting with their place at home in temples, and then turning to the question of how human worshipers interacted with them. The final chapter deals with the destruction of cult images at the hands of barbarians, Christian iconoclasts, and even pagans themselves.

As with any aspect of ancient religion, we are faced with the problem that the surviving evidence for belief and ritual action in the Roman Empire is remarkably uneven. Information about large public cults and the views of authors from the first centuries BC and AD overshadow a myriad of local divinities and private practices that were just as important a part of the whole system. Moreover, there was no such thing as a unified or consistent pagan religion for us to reconstruct. The term "paganism," or less frequently "ancient polytheism," is routinely used to describe a variety of common practices and beliefs, and to distinguish them from ancient Judaism and Christianity, but a unified and homogenous belief system comparable to the modern construct of a religion did not exist. The Roman sense of *religio* included practices that were customary and proper for both individuals and the state to follow to maintain good relations with the gods. We may detect common traditions and patterns over wide geographical and chronological ranges, but unlike Christianity or Judaism, there was no single official creed or rule book. This makes the reconstruction of ancient religious experience remarkably difficult, since individual belief and practice was naturally varied.[2]

Idols and cult images were certainly a major part of Roman religious life, but with a few exceptions, most introductory and comprehensive books on Roman religion have either completely ignored their place in ritual and daily life or have greatly downplayed it.[3] While the topic of image worship has recently become of interest in studies of Greek religion, very little attention has been paid to the Roman evidence, especially in the imperial period.[4] It may well be that there is a certain reluctance to ascribe to the founding cultures of Western civilization a practice that is now considered repugnant and illogical by the modern Western mind. A similar tendency to downplay the role of images in ritual is a well-documented problem in modern studies of Hinduism.[5]

Discussions of idol worship are just as absent in the scholarship of Roman art and archaeology.[6] Since Winckelmann, the primary focus of classical archaeology has been on the forms, style, iconography, and semantics of ancient works of art. The past century has seen enormous advances in our ability to "read" the messages of Roman sculpture, especially state reliefs, and to understand them in their historical context. Today, we can not only recognize and date different artistic trends and styles, but can also detect the intentional use of older styles to add a particular shade of meaning to an artwork.[7] While these are all very significant achievements, the social function of Roman art has been neglected, and the study of art's place in society, especially in terms of its environment, function, and viewer response, is still very much in its infancy.[8]

The dominance of traditional art historical approaches to ancient sculpture has resulted in a bad case of the so-called museum effect, in which objects removed from their original physical and social contexts are admired for, and are understood by, traits and details that would have been secondary, and perhaps even invisible, to their original users.[9] For example, Hindu cult images are, and Roman images probably were, routinely covered with flowers, garlands, and other organic trappings which are not preserved in the museums in which they are now displayed. Yet the scholarship of Roman sculpture nonetheless concentrates on the durable physical aspects of cult images, without pausing to consider the issue of their visibility.[10] The attributes and postures of ancient images of the gods allowed divinities to be identified, and may have conveyed other messages besides, but these meanings were largely independent of their main functions as cult objects.[11] Though the Romans were perfectly capable of appreciating the artistic qualities of religious sculpture, and could certainly read their own iconographic messages, they would not necessarily have understood either aspect as the most important characteristic of their idols. These were first and foremost objects that that granted them access to their gods – objects that were prayed to by individuals, and that were the focal point of communal rituals.

Before going any further into these functional aspects of Roman idols, two controversial points need to be addressed. First, my choice of terminology, and the use of the word "idol," and second, the assumption that the Romans even made a distinction between idols and other cult images, believing some cult images to be divine, or at least more worthy of worship than others.

IDOLS AND CULT IMAGES

Derived from the Latin *idolum*, and the Greek *eidolon*, the English word "idol" refers specifically to objects that are perceived of as divine and are the direct recipients of worship by communities and groups of people. We also tend to think of idols as the objects and images that were displayed in the most prominent location in temples and holy places, making the term ideal for the purposes of this book. But the word also brings a good deal of ideological baggage with it, stemming from its use in translations of early Christian texts that condemn idolatry, and in the writings of European colonial anthropologists and ethnographers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who employed it in descriptions of the "primitive" religion of living cultures outside of Europe.[12] Both saw "idols" and "idolatry" as sinful or else barbaric. For these reasons, the word "idol" has fallen somewhat out of favor in recent scholarly literature, and is often replaced with the more generic and, arguably, more neutral term "cult image."

Unfortunately, the term "cult image," or "cult statue," as well as the German equivalent "*Kultbild,*" and the French "*image de culte,*" are all problematic as well, since their meaning is ambiguous. While they are often used to denote worshiped images (especially statues), the same terms are also used to describe votive offerings, small figurines, architectural sculpture, and other religious artworks that were not worshiped, and were certainly not the main attractions or focal points of temples.[13] In a conscious effort to avoid this confusion, Ioannis Mylonopoulos recently employed the term "divine images" as opposed to set some images apart from mere "images of divinities."[14] But the first of these terms implies a universal acceptance of divinity, when ancient belief in the divinity of the idols varied. More importantly, both terms exclude objects that were not images, but that were nonetheless the recipients of worship. Some of the most important idols of the Greek and Roman world were aniconic, that is, they were not figural representations, but were objects such as sacred stones, animals, and trees, and yet were functionally just as important as figural representations. Conveniently, the word idol can also be applied both to figural artworks and natural or aniconic objects.

I suspect that the modern hesitation to employ the term idol lies as much in our own difficulty in admitting that the Romans were "idolaters" as it does with any sense of political incorrectness of the term. The word idol is also routinely used by Indian writers in English to translate the word *murti*, an image of a divinity that receives worship.[15] Anthropologist Alfred Gell and classicist Jörg Rüpke have both recognized the utility of the term idol as an unambiguous reference to a worshiped object, with the former suggesting that its rejection sacrifices a useful term for the sake of being overly politically correct.[16]

In this book, the word idol is used to refer to an object that was the focal point of worship in a temple. Idols belong to the broader category of "cult images," which include other representations of the gods, such as votive offerings, temple decorations, or the relief carvings on altars. Unlike other cult images, however, idols possessed three distinguishing attributes. They were stored in the most prominent place of a Roman temple or sacred enclosure, they received regular worship from large groups of people or communities, and, perhaps most importantly, they were perceived to possess agency. That is to say that their worshipers believed that idols could both receive their petitions and act upon them. This last point may be equated with the belief that the idol was somehow divine, but, as we shall see below, the nature of that belief was probably varied in nature.

While all cult images could be used in rituals, and some could even evolve into idols, most were not initially the objects of worship or perceived of as having a divine aspect. Within temple sites, these other cult images were not the prime attraction for visitors. Arguably other objects may be seen as having idol-like qualities, such as the figurines in Roman household shrines (*lararia*), or the images of the emperor that appeared in law courts and other public places. Both could be the recipients of libations, food offerings, prayers, and other forms of veneration. This book, however, is concerned only with idols and other cult images found within public temples and comparable holy places.

ANCIENT TERMS AND DISTINCTIONS

An alternative to the English word idol might conceivably take the form of some ancient Greek or Latin term that distinguished between worshiped objects and other cult images, but studies of both Greek and Latin vocabulary have sought such a distinction in vain. Most recently, Sylvie Estienne and Peter Stewart considered various Latin words used for sculpted images and statues: *simulacrum*, *signum*, *effigies*, *imago*, and *statua*. The words *statua* and *imago* are mostly used to denote representations of humans and *imago* usually refers to a bust or partial representation. *Signum* and *simulacrum* most frequently describe representations of divinities, while *effigies* could refer to images of either gods or humans.[17] Estienne found that the terms *simulacrum* and *signum* were used interchangeably for depictions of divinities by Livy, but that Suetonius and Tacitus strongly favored *simulacrum*.[18] Stewart rather more confidently argued that *signa* were normally dedications to the gods, while *simulacra* were the actual idols of Roman temples.[19]

There are, of course, many exceptions and inconsistencies to these definitions, as well as changes in word choice over time. Estienne noted that Cicero referred to the statue of Diana stolen by Verres from the Segestans in Sicily with the word *simulacrum* in four instances, with *signum* in three, and in four more instances simply used the name of the goddess.[20] When ancient authors use the names of divinities alone to refer to statues, whether referring to idols or other works of art, this is an indication of just how easily the Roman mind could equate artworks with the divinity. A similar use of the names of divinities to refer to statues exists in the modern Hindu world as well. The need to insert the words "representation of" before a deity's name is one that is more natural to the modern Western reader than it is to those who venerate images in polytheistic societies, where at times the image simply is the divinity.[21]

Even more effort has been expended on the terminology of ancient Greek religious statues than for the Latin speaking world. The Greek words *ágalma*, *xóanon*, *eíkon*, *andriás*, *hédos*, and *brétas* have all been considered in great detail. None of them unambiguously and consistently refers to an idol in opposition to other cult images, or even exclusively to representations of divinities.[22] The word *ágalma* (pl. *agálmata*) is comparable to the Latin *simulacrum*, in that it usually denotes an idol, as does *xóanon* (pl. *xóana*), which normally refers to older wooden statues.[23] But as with Latin, there is no word in Greek that is so consistently used for divine images and objects in temples that we might adopt it in the place of "idol."

The lack of a clear term to set idols apart from other cult images in both Greek and Latin has led to the proposal that no such distinction between different kinds of representations of the gods even existed in antiquity.[24] Alice Donohue went so far as to argue that the need to distinguish between cult images and idols is an entirely modern and invented necessity. The distinction, she believed, was derived from Christian reactions to idolatry, the debate about the nature of ritual and imagery in post-Reformation Christianity, and early anthropological concepts of fetishism. Moreover, if no such distinction existed, presumably any representation of a god could receive veneration from pagan worshipers, or else images were simply not an important part of Greek or Roman ritual practice.[25]

From an archaeological standpoint, this confusion is increased by the fact that Roman temples contained not just one image, but many. In the Roman ritual of undertaking a vow, individuals brokered deals with the gods and made payments to them that often took the form of altars, statues, and even entirely new temples or ancillary shrines. These votive offerings (*vota*) were displayed for long periods within temple buildings and on temple grounds, and could themselves become the focus of ritual activities. The donation of lavish votive offerings could afford private individuals the opportunity for self-aggrandizement. Thus the sculptural dedications displayed in any Roman temple would have quickly outnumbered the original idol or idols of a temple, and could have outshone them in quality and size. This point is a recurring theme in this book, posing the question of how archaeologists can distinguish between the two types of cult image when looking at the sculptures from a single temple site.

Approaching cult images from the standpoint of dictionary entries alone, however, ignores the human element of ancient religion. The lack of a Greek or Latin term to denote an idol does not mean that the concept did not exist. Nor does the fact that multiple images could be worshiped in a single temple, or outside of one, show that all cult images were equal or unimportant. If idols were no different from any other depiction of a divinity, then what was the point of the temples that were built to house them? Moreover, Roman historians present several instances in which a distinction was made between different classes of religious images. The most compelling examples are those situations in which the two types of statue have become unintentionally mixed up.

One such situation can be found in Livy's account of the decision of the Roman senate in 210 BC to inflict a set of severe punishments upon the defeated Capuans and their allies, who had aided Hannibal against Rome in the second Punic War. In addition to auctioning the land and livestock of the Capuans, and reducing a large portion of their population to slavery, the Romans were also faced with the issue of statues that had been taken from Capua as booty. Rather than selling the statues off at once, or melting them all down, the Senate decreed that the College of Pontiffs should first decide "which of the statues were profane and which were sacred."[26] Unlike some other less important cult images, the idols of traitors were still too holy to be destroyed or sold, and the highest religious authorities in Rome were needed to deal with them. In this case, a distinction was being made between idols and other cult images, or perhaps between those images which belonged to the gods and those which did not.[27]

In 187 BC, a similar situation arose: a delegation of Ambracians complained to the Roman Senate that M. Fulvius Nobilior had unjustly pillaged their city. Amongst their other complaints:

> ... *quod se ante omnia moveat, templa tota urbe spoliata ornamentis; simulacra deum, deos immo ipsos, convulsos ex sedibus suis ablatos esse; parietes postesque nudatos, quos adorent, ad quos precentur et supplicent Ambraciensibus superesse* ...
>
> ... what disturbed them most of all, was that the temples throughout the city had been stripped of their ornaments; the images of the gods, or rather the gods themselves, had been torn from their seats and carried away; bare walls and doorposts, they said, had been left to the Ambracians to adore, to pray to, and to supplicate ...[28]

These images were clearly essential to the worship of the Greek Ambracians, and this was something that could be recognized and understood in Rome. Note that these image (*simulacra*) were "the very gods themselves" (*deos immo ipsos*), and were essential for adoration, prayer, and supplication. The senate eventually passed a decree in favor of the Ambracians, ordaining once again that the College of Pontiffs should decide how to handle the statues (*signa aliaque ornamenta*) upon the return of Fulvius to Rome.[29] Presumably some kind of distinction needed to be made between different types of statues, perhaps so that they might receive appropriate treatment while in Rome, or perhaps because Fulvius had dedicated some of them as offerings in other temples since sacking the Greek city. In either case, the difference between two types of images was real and important enough that the pontiffs themselves were needed to decide what to do.

The Romans also recognized the divinity of the idols of their enemies. When at war, the Romans sometimes resorted to the ritual of *evocatio*, in which a general called upon the gods of enemy cities to abandon their homes and move to Rome, where they were promised temples and honors. It was not unknown for idols in some ancient cities to be chained to the floor to prevent the divinity from accepting such offers. Livy provides our only detailed description of *evocatio*, discussed in more detail in Chapter 2, in which the goddess Juno Regina was moved from the defeated city of Veii to a new temple on the Aventine Hill in Rome.[30] These rites of *evocatio* called upon specific divinities, or specific idols, and the countermeasure of chaining was also applied to specific idols, not to all images of the same divinity. Evidently it would have disturbed the relationship of the state with the gods, the *pax deorum,* to destroy or mistreat certain statues that were inhabited by gods, even if they were living in the temples of Rome's immediate enemies. Other enemy statues that represented the gods, however, were mere decoration and could be legitimately taken as plunder.

Elsewhere we read of the appropriateness or inappropriateness of actions involving different kinds of statues, including where emperors placed their own images. Suetonius tells us how Tiberius insisted that his own images should not be displayed amongst the images of the gods, but with the other ornaments of temples.[31] Likewise, Pliny praised Trajan for being content with having his image displayed on the steps of temples, and outside their *cellae* where images of the gods belonged.[32] This suggests that certain ritual treatments and areas of display were reserved for particular kinds of statue, and these did not normally include representations of emperors. In the eastern Roman world, where the practice of ruler worship was already established, the emperor's image could be placed amongst those of the gods without hesitation.

Sylvie Estienne has convincingly demonstrated that one major distinction between different statues and artworks in Roman temples was based on their legal status as property. Statues could be either consecrated, and described as *simulacra deorum*, or else belong to the *ornamenta deorum*, the temple decorations. The latter category includes votive statues and other temple equipment, which, critically, could be moved, sold, or otherwise disposed of by a temple's administration.[33] An inscription dating to 58 BC from Furfo set out guidelines by which the surplus goods in a temple of Jupiter Liber could be disposed of, stipulating that the proceeds from the sale of *ornamenta* were only to be used to pay for further ornamentation or maintenance of the temple.[34] Both Rome and her allies would occasionally draw upon the *ornamenta* of temples at times of crisis.[35] In the other category were those statues that belonged to the original endowment of a temple and that were considered sacred (*sacra*), and which could not be sold or taken out of the temple. A temple's idol clearly belonged to this latter group of inviolable temple possessions.

We have no information about what criteria the pontiffs used to separate the different types of statues of the Capuans or the Ambracians. Obviously they must have been required to do more than just recognize artworks that depicted gods. Presumably they were distinguishing between *simulacra deorum* and *ornamenta*, or between idols and other cult images, but how could they tell the difference? Perhaps some of the pontiffs had personal experience of the temples and idols of Capua and Ambracia, or had access to people who did, but we should not rule out other ritual possibilities. In the fifth century AD, one Heraiskos of Alexandria claimed to have the ability to distinguish between cult statues (*agálmata*) that were alive and those that were dead, a claim that we will revisit in Chapter 6.[36] Evidently there were other mystical distinctions that went beyond the official or legal status of statues in temples.

Clearly some statues in Roman temples had a different status than others, in legal, religious, and moral terms. At the very least, there was a scale of importance amongst representations of the gods. Some images were more holy and more divine than others, if indeed there was not a clear dichotomy between idols and all other images. So just how did this divinity or sacred value of idols function?

THE DIVINITY OF IDOLS

> *Quis autem adorat vel orat intuens simulacrum, qui non sic afficitur, ut ab eo se exaudiri putet, ab eo sibi praestari quod desiderat speret?*
>
> Does anyone worship or pray gazing on an idol, without being persuaded that it is hearing his petition and without hoping that it will give him what he wants?[37]

The nature of the divinity of cult images is a topic that Ioannis Mylonopoulos recently described as "an endless story about theories, methods and terminologies."[38] No ancient pagan author gives a definitive or comprehensive theology of cult images and idols, and we have seen that there is no easy linguistic definition either. By its very nature, ancient polytheism lacked the sort of official documents and statements of belief that unify and delineate modern Western religions, so it is not surprising that we have no ancient statement setting out the nature of either Greek or Roman idols. The shortest answer to this endless debate is that different beliefs were held by individuals about idols, ranging from those who thought the idols were themselves gods to those who did not believe in their divinity at all. A similar diversity of belief existed in the Greek and Roman world about the existence and nature of the gods themselves, and Dietrich Boschung has argued that one critical function of idols was to affirm the very existence of the gods.[39]

Though textual evidence for Roman idol worship is anecdotal in nature, it nonetheless provides a glimpse into the range of this belief and the actions associated with it. In the Roman imperial period, some of the most direct and detailed sources for what pagans believed and did can be found in the works of those Christian writers who attacked them. This includes direct statements like those of Augustine reproduced above, an author who had no doubt that the pagans really believed their idols to be divine.

Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian, and Augustine of Hippo all wrote extensive assaults on idol worship, their texts sometimes taking the form of dialogues with real or imagined pagan disputants. How, the Christian apologists repeatedly demand, can lifeless and unhearing material be considered divine? Idols, they observe, are composed of base and corruptible materials, subject to theft and decay, whereas the gods are supposedly all-powerful, vengeful, and eternal.[40] How can things made by base and fallible humans be the same as the gods who are immortal and perfect?[41] Some of the idols, the Christians even asserted, were intentionally designed to deceive, hiding their baser nature beneath gilding and paint, being hollow, or, in the case of acrolithic statues, consisting of nothing more than wooden frames inside.[42]

The imagined pagan disputants had, of course, no satisfying answers to these questions and charges. Christian authors gleefully recalled that even some Stoic, Pythagorean, and Neo-platonic philosophers agreed that the belief in the divinity of idols led to more erroneous ideas about the gods and superstitious practices.[43] As Baynes noted long ago, the Christian authors were, in fact, themselves using the very rhetorical arguments of these pagan philosophers to make their case against idolatry. The nature of cult images, and the related question of whether the gods had a physical form, had been debated long before the birth of Christ.[44] But the existence of such extensive philosophical arguments against the divinity of idols must also confirm that such beliefs were real for some, even if they were not for those who protested them. Otherwise the issue would not have arisen at all.

For a more complex philosophy of idols, beyond the mere statement that they are somehow divine, we may look to Arnobius. A teacher of rhetoric in Sicca Veneria (Numidia) in the early fourth century AD, Arnobius wrote a seven-book attack on paganism entitled *Adversus Nationes*. His sixth book concerned temples and idols, and drew heavily on Clement of Alexandria and another Christian source that is now lost.[45] Arnobius makes the usual arguments about the lifeless nature of idols, their corruptible materials, and their powerlessness, all of which can be found in other Christian authors, but then goes on to make several more detailed points about individual pagan beliefs about idols. These are summarized in the table below.

TABLE 1 *Idolatrous beliefs according to Arnobius of Sicca*

	Idolatrous belief	Sample passages from Arnobius (Translations based on McCracken 1949)
1	**The idols are gods**	and you do not laugh when, instead of the immortal gods, you make supplication to little images of men and human forms – nay you even suppose that these very little images are gods, and besides these you do not believe that anything has divine power. *... et abstinetis a risu, cum pro diis immortalibus sigilliosis hominum, et formis supplicates humanis. Quinimmo deos esse sigillaria ipsa censetis, nec praetor haec quidquam vim creditis habere divinam. (Adv. nat.* 6.11 = Migne 5.1187A)
2	**The gods live in idols**	The gods live in images. *In simulacris dii habitant* (*Adv. nat.* 6.19 = Migne 1202A) If it is plain and clear to you that the gods live in the inner parts of images ... *Si apertum vobis et liquidum est, in signorum visceribus deos vivere ...* (*Adv. nat.* 6.20 = Migne 1203)
3	**Idols can feel and hear**	And while it is plain and clear that you are speaking to senseless things, you think that you are heard. *... et cum pateat, luceat, rebus fieri verba cum brutis, exaudiri vos remini ...* *(Adv. nat. 6.16* = Migne 5.1196.16B)
4	**Idols are tools that enable the worship of the gods.**	“We worship the gods,” you say, “by means of images.” *Deos inquitis, per simulacra veneramur. (Adv. nat.* 6.9= Migne 5.1180.9.B)
5	**The idols provide a divine presence, since we are not allowed to see the gods.**	Do you perchance say, that under these images of deities there is displayed to you their presence? And because it is not given to you to see the gods, they are worshipped in this fashion? *...An numquid dictis forte, praesentiam vobis quamdam his numinum sub exhiberi simulacris ... (Adv. nat.* 6.8–9 = *Migne, 1180.8.A)*
6	**Idols are made divine by consecration and dedication causes the gods to dwell in them.**	[pagans do not worship the material substance of the idols] ... but in them we worship and venerate those (i.e. the gods) whom their dedication as sacred introduces and causes to dwell in statues made by workmen. *Sed eos in his colimus, eosque veneramur, quos dedicatio infert sacra, et fabrilibus efficit inhabitare simulacris* (*Adv. nat.* 6.17 = Migne 1199–1200A)

(continued)

TABLE 1 *(continued)*

	Idolatrous belief	Sample passages from Arnobius (Translations based on McCracken 1949)
7	**The ancients knew that idols had no divine nature, but used them wisely to control common people**	Here also the advocates of images are wont to say this also, that the ancients knew well that images have no divine nature, and that there is no sense in them, but that they formed them profitably and wisely, for the sake of the unmanageable and ignorant mob, which is the majority in nations and in states, in order that a kind of appearance, as it were, of deities being presented to them, from fear that they might shake off their rude natures, and supposing that they were acting in the presence of the gods, put away their impious deeds, and changing their manners, learn to act as men. *In parte hac eadem illud etiam dicere simulacrorum assertores solent, non ignorasse, antiquos nihil habere numinis signa, neque ullum omnino inesse his sensum; sed propter indomitum atque imperitum vulgus, quae pars in populis atque in civitatibus maxima est, salutariter ea consilioque formasse: ut velut quaedem specie objecta his numinum abiicerent asperitatem metu; abritratique praesentibus sese sub diis agere, facta impia deponerent, et ad humana officia morum mutatione transirent. (Adv. nat.* 6.24 = Migne 1212.A)

Of course, Arnobius and other Christian writers picked which ideas about idolatry they would attack, and how to present them. Their pro-idolatry positions have been described by one author as "painfully systematic" and intended for the sole purpose of demolition, but while they are certainly being presented by hostile sources, this does not mean that these arguments are merely rhetorical contrivances.[46] The presentation of fictional beliefs about idolatry would have been blatantly transparent and thus rhetorically weak to contemporary readers.

The bigger problem with the Christian (and pagan) authors is not so much that they present strawmen, but that they represent the views of the elite, upper class, and educated members of society, who are engaging in a sort of philosophical dialogue with other members of that same section of society. The anthropologist Alfred Gell noted a distinct anti-idol sentiment amongst the educated in world cultures: "it is almost as if learning to read and write disqualifies one from engaging in this practice [of idol worship] with any enthusiasm."[47] Arnobius and other Christian writers present arguments against idolatry that required a degree of abstract thinking in which its practitioners simply did not engage. This was a level of philosophical discourse that belonged to the educated elite, and it is unlikely that many people thought of idols in such abstract terms or at this level of detail. Nonetheless, the fact that philosophical discourse could attack idolatry in this fashion shows that at least some believed idols were divine, or at least behaved as if they were.

The continued use of idols throughout most of Rome's history speaks for an acceptance that was automatic, visceral, and without need for a philosophical argument. The points and counterpoints of the Christian and Platonic philosophers probably never entered the heads of the vast majority of Romans. A passage in Seneca, quoted by Augustine, illustrates the reality of idol worship amongst ordinary people:

> *In Capitolium perveni, pudebit publicatae dementiae, quod sibi vanus furor adtribuit officii. Alius nomina deo subicit, alius horas Iovi nuntiat; alius lutor est, alius unctor, qui vano motu bracchiorum imitatur unguentem. Sunt quae Iunoni ac Minervae capillos disponant (longe a templo, non tantum a simulacro stantes digitos movent ornantium modo), sunt quae speculum teneant; sunt qui ad vadimonia sua deos advocent, sunt qui libellos offerant et illos causam suam doceant. Doctus archimimus, senex iam decrepitus, cotidie in Capitolio mimum agebat, quasi dii libenter spectarent quem illi homines desierant. Omne illic artificum genus operatum diis inmortalibus desidet.*
>
> But go to the Capitol, and you will be ashamed of the folly there disclosed, and of the duties which a deluded madness has assigned itself. One servant informs Jupiter of the names of his worshippers, another announces the hours; one is his bather, another his anointer, that is, he gestures with empty hands to imitate the act of anointing. There are women who are hairdressers for Juno and Minerva: while standing far away from the temple as well as from the image they move the fingers as if they were dressing the hair, and there are others who hold a mirror. There are men who summon the gods to give bond for them, and some who offer them lawyer's briefs and explain their case. An expert leading actor in the mimes, now a decrepit old man, used to act a mime each day in the Capitol – as if the gods would enjoy the performance of a player when men had ceased to do so. Every kind of artisan sits there to devote his time to the immortal gods.[48]

Though both Augustine and Seneca sneered at them, ordinary Romans engaged in activities centered on idols that can only be understood if those idols were perceived of as divine or otherwise stood in for the gods. In short, they suggest the sort of views presented by Arnobius were common. In Chapters 4 and 5, we shall see how temples functioned as the houses of gods, and how interactions with idols were dependent on the assumption that the idols were both embodiments of divinities and participating members of local human society.

Arnobius and his contemporaries also suggest that multiple and even contradictory beliefs about the nature of idols existed simultaneously in antiquity.[49]

Idols were both symbolic tools that enable worship (**Tables 1.4** and **1.5**), were divine themselves (**Table 1.1**), or were somehow inhabited by the gods (**Table 1.2**). Anthropologists and scholars of comparative religion confirm that multiple beliefs about the divinity of images often exist within a single religious group, and that these beliefs may evolve over time. Moreover, and this is important as far as the texts are concerned, the sort of things that individuals will say about their belief about the nature of religious images very often differs from how they actually behave toward them.[50] This point was not lost on the Christians authors, who pointed to Cicero and Seneca as hypocrites who decried the worship of idols as superstitious in their philosophical writings, but continued to behave in public as if they were divine.[51]

If we are to understand the place of idols in Roman religion at all, the textual and archaeological evidence alone is insufficient. It must be supplemented with other evidence, including anthropological theories and studies of idol worship in recent and living cultures.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORY AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION

The role of images and objects in religion, ritual, and magic has fascinated anthropologists for many years, especially in studies of the cultures of Australia, West Africa, Polynesia, and the Indian subcontinent. In these areas, image (and object) veneration has been recorded in detail by modern ethnographic studies, and in earlier historical reports of European travelers encountering "savage" or "primitive" societies. Drawing analogies with these better-documented instances of image worship has great potential to provide insight into the ancient Roman practice. While such cross-cultural comparisons are routinely used to understand aspects of European prehistory, the technique is decidedly underexploited in the study of the Greek and Roman worlds, perhaps because scholars feel the extensive textual evidence available makes it unnecessary. But since the picture of religious life that is presented by the surviving ancient texts is just as fragmentary as the evidence of archaeology, it is certainly a mistake to neglect what comparative studies might have to offer.

There is disagreement amongst both anthropologists and archaeologists on the value of cross-cultural comparisons, as well as the methodology that should be applied in using them. The central danger of any comparative study rests in the fact that all social phenomena are the products of the environments and contexts of the individual cultures that produced them. Thus cross-cultural analogy runs the risk of identifying similar causes for similar effects, when in fact quite different circumstances may account for the same phenomenon in two separate cultures. Moreover, we are subconsciously prone to choose not only the parallels we want to see, but also those that we understand best from our own cultural backgrounds.[52] But anthropology as a discipline is intrinsically cross-cultural, and few archaeologists or anthropologists reject comparative evidence entirely. After all, the basic assumption of anthropology is that humans will behave in similar ways in similar circumstances.[53] Even a single anecdotal analogy can serve to at least increase the range of possible explanations for historical or archaeological phenomena that we do not understand.

The accepted solution to the dangers of cross-cultural comparison is to attempt to use examples from cultures that share as many traits as possible, or to make comparisons between cultures that are somehow linked. This should increase the likelihood that the phenomena from two different cultures are the result of similar causes. Alternatively, anthropologists often use large numbers of cross-cultural examples to develop broad models or theories that explain human behavior.[54] Such models of human behavior may then be applied to the individual phenomenon being studied.

Some of the earliest anthropological models, developed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, concerned the development of society and religion in terms of evolution. The worship of idols, or Durkheim's more complicated concept of "totems," was just one part of one step in a perceived linear and universal development of primitive religion.[55] The influence of these theorists on our understanding of Roman image worship is still very much felt today. In Chapters 2 and 3 we shall see that an aniconic phase, in which images of the gods are entirely absent, is routinely posited for early Celtic, Germanic, and Roman religion. This assumption is the direct result of these cultures being categorized into the earliest stage of an evolutionary model of religion, a model in which the worship of idols was a later development. This is utter nonsense, but the problem of these early anthropological theorists was not so much their use of cross-cultural comparisons, but rather their firm and erroneous belief that the same sort of evolutionary development found in biology could be applied directly to the development of human social structures. Large-scale anthropological comparisons do not allow us to build universal predictive models of human behavior in this way, but that does not mean they are useless. Instead, good anthropological models help us understand the broad constructs that are used by humans to understand and interact with the world around them.

Fortunately, there is a more nuanced and up-to-date anthropological model that we may consider to help understand the place of idols in Roman society. Recent discussions of idol worship, and the role of art in society, have been dominated by Alfred Gell's posthumously published book *Art and Agency*, which used cross-cultural examples ranging from Polynesia, India, Africa, and South America.[56] Gell's central thesis was that artworks, and idols in particular, only function because they have attained a degree of social agency that is normally accorded to people within the cultures that create and use them. That is to say, that within a given society, idols have the ability to act, or are perceived to act, and thus precipitate appropriate actions and responses from humans. Amongst the many cultures he considered, Gell found that broadly similar mechanisms and structures were employed to generate this sense of agency.

The thought process and theoretical framework of idol worship outlined by Gell is not entirely dissimilar to James Frazer's concepts of sympathetic and contagious magic, though Gell preferred the terms mimesis and volt sorcery. In Frazer's sympathetic magic, objects or effigies are used to assert magical power over the targets they physically resemble or mimic. In contagious magic, objects or substances that have been in close contact with the target develop power over it. Both conceptions of magic can, and often do, exist simultaneously. Idols, according to Gell, are understood by people to affect the gods either because they look like them (mimesis, or sympathetic magic), or because they contain special relics or substances connected to the gods (volt sorcery, or contagious magic).[57]

Gell also identified what he termed internalist and externalist strategies that can be used to grant agency to idols.[58] In an externalist strategy, an idol is simply granted agency via rituals that surround its creation or installation. This might include elaborate rites surrounding the creation of the image, or the addition of finishing touches of idols by priests, shamans, or other ritual specialists. The internalist strategy involves placing a special object or substance inside an idol which bestows it with legitimacy and agency. As in magical practices, some cultures employ multiple strategies to endow their idols with agency. These strategies served to counter the sort of natural objections raised by Arnobius and others that idols are inanimate and thus powerless objects.

One of Gell's best examples of an idol being bestowed with agency, and hence divinity, is the routine replacement of three wooden idols in the Temple of Jagannath in Puri (discussed in detail in Chapter 6) that takes place every 8 or 15 years in a ceremony called the Nabakalevara. This lengthy ritual employs both internalist and externalist strategies to establish the divinity of the new idols. Wood for the statues is selected from neem trees with particular physical characteristics that are found growing in locations meeting certain criteria. After they are felled, the wood is brought to Puri in a procession and carved into the shape of the gods. After a long series of rituals, the new cult images are installed in the inner sanctum of the temple in a secret ceremony in which priests paint pupils onto their eyes. The same ceremony also includes an internalist strategy, in which a sacred substance is transferred from a compartment in the old idols into the new ones. Thus the divinity of the old idols is passed on.[59] In each of these stages, crowds of witnesses and participants are involved, or are conspicuously excluded, further heightening interest in the images, and ensuring them a place within the society that worships them.

As Gell was aware, similar concepts existed in ancient cultures as well. There is textual evidence for animation rituals involving statues in Egypt and the Near East, as well as instances of idols containing special sacred substances, but we have no evidence for anything comparable for the Roman world.[60] That does not, of course, mean that such rituals did not exist. In fact, the distinction identified by Estienne between consecrated images and *ornamenta,* and Arnobius' comment that it is through consecration that images become divine (**Table 1.6**), both suggest that they did. The internalist strategies could also convey a sense of continuity that obviated the sort of complaints articulated by early Christian authors that idols were merely the work of human hands. This sense of continuity, as we shall see in Chapters 1 and 2, was very important to the Romans as far as the shape and form of their cult images was concerned, but at a few temple sites, discussed in Chapter 4, we even have archaeological evidence for the reuse of fragments of older statues inside newer idol bases, as well as continuity of placement.

For Gell's purposes, the social agency of idols was achieved and retained through their role and place in the societies that created them, and not so much via their aesthetic value or the coded meanings of their iconography. Of course, the grandeur of colossal statues, the glamourous jewelry and costumes they wear, or the precious material from which they are made, can also lend a sense of awe that contributes to divine status. Some Hindu texts ordain that idols must be as beautiful as possible to attract the gods to live in them.[61] But other idols are natural objects – sacred stones, trees, or meteorites, not made by human hands, and these aniconic idols still function via the same mechanisms as figural idols, and can exist side-by-side with them.[62] Hinduism possesses a rich tradition of divine figural representations, but natural stones and small column-shaped idols known as Shiva Lingas are considered amongst its holiest representations of the god Shiva.[63] The co-existence of aniconic and iconic idols has been discussed in the Greek world by Milette Gaifman, and in Chapters 2 and 3 we will find the same co-existence in the Roman world as well.[64]

Gell argued that it was continuous interaction between both individuals and groups of humans that served to retain agency in an idol. Even earlier anthropologists and sociologists, such as Émile Durkheim, recognized that groups respond differently to idols (totems) than individuals do.[65] In the Hindu world, idols are the focal points of a series of daily rituals that continually reaffirm their personhood, and thus their social agency.[66] Diane Eck has described the Hindu relationship between idols and their worshipers as one that can be compared by outsiders to playing house: "The image is wakened in the morning, honored with incense and song, dressed, and fed. Throughout the day, other such rites appropriate to the time of day are performed until, finally the deity is put to bed in the evening."[67] Worshipers and priests regularly present images with gifts of food, water, and flowers, conducting gestures of respect (*puja*) that would be appropriate to an honored visitor. Like the Romans, modern Hindus hold a variety of ideas about the divinity of idols, some viewing them as purely symbolic, others as being inhabited by divinities.[68] These actions are a means of confirming and sustaining the social agency of the idols, and Chapter 5 explores comparable actions in the Roman world in this light.

Other models for understanding ancient religious activities have been derived from Hindu concepts in addition to *puja*. The Hindu term *darshan* describes a visual connection between images and their devotees, and is a central aspect of Hindu worship. Temples are visited not only so that worshipers may see idols, but also so that they may be seen by the idols, either individually or in groups.[69] Ian Rutherford has compared the Hindu tradition of *darshan* to the Greek conception of *theoria*, in which pilgrimages are undertaken to interact with, and to see, the gods at specific sites. While there may well be similarities between Greco-Roman sacred travel and Hindu *darshan*, the aspect that is most relevant here is that of the visual connection between divinity, in the form of the idol, and the worshiper.[70]

Even without reference to *darshan*, recent studies have emphasized the importance of viewing and visuality in Roman religious practice.[71] Jàs Elsner argued that the setting of ancient cult images in Roman temples contributed to their divine status, with visual contact between the viewer and the god forming the climactic moment of a visit to a Roman temple.[72] Drawing on literary descriptions of the Second Sophistic, Greek epigrams, and representations of cult images in votive art, Verity Platt has argued that the viewing an image can be seen as a form of epiphany, an encounter in which the viewer was able to see the divinity through his or her image.[73] For both authors, the concept of mimesis is critical to this sort of ritual viewing and epiphany, since it is through the statue's close resemblance to the god that a divine presence or divine experience is enabled.[74] Though we do not have such rich textual evidence for the Roman West, in Chapter 4 we will see how idols were positioned to be the center of attention within a temple, and thus accessible for some kind of encounter with the worshiper.

While we cannot draw one-to-one parallels between ancient and modern evidence, living traditions still have the potential to explain the modes of thought and action that are left unexpressed by the texts, and which cannot be deduced from the archaeological evidence alone. At the very least, cross-cultural analogy, especially in the realm of religion, provides archaeologists and historians with a range of what is possible and plausible in any human society.[75]

In the above discussion, and in the later chapters of this book, many of the examples to which Roman practice is compared are taken from Hindu India. Of course, the icons of the Byzantine and Orthodox Christianity, or the power objects of tribal Africa and Polynesia, are also objects with agency that can be compared to the pagan idols of the ancient world. Examples from these diverse cultures were used in the creation of Gell's model of art and agency, but I have chosen to focus on India. The power objects (once called fetishes) of Africa and Polynesia are often used in situations connected with medicine, magic, and ancestor worship. In Christian thought, the icon is explicitly not divine, though it often appears to be treated as such, and may well have possessed Gell's agency. It should also be noted that this choice of Indian examples was in no way based on a Dumézilian assumption that Roman and Hindu mythology and practices share some kind of common Indo-European heritage.[76] In my view, Hindu tradition and the cultures of India simply have more in common with the Roman world, and are thus a more appropriate source of comparative material.

Much like the word "paganism," the term "Hinduism" is a nineteenth century invention that was applied to common beliefs and traditions that contained enormous regional variation.[77] Like Roman paganism, Hinduism lacks a fixed creed or set of beliefs, and is rooted in a literate and socially stratified society. Moreover, in Hinduism we are dealing with another polytheistic religious tradition that houses images of its gods in public temples alongside other related images that include architectural decoration and votive offerings that are not worshiped. My point, of course, is not to equate Hindu *murti* with the idols of ancient Rome, but to suggest that modes of thought and action found in modern and historical India may help to explain phenomena or fill lacuna for which no other evidence is available in the ancient world.

As our very first cross-cultural parallel, we may note that both Hindu and Roman images had long histories within the temples that housed them.[78] The power of idols, both ancient and modern, remained long after their creation, and the meanings of Roman artworks at the time of their creation could change over decades and centuries. To help understand the long-term role of idols, both collectively and individually, the biographical method of interpreting art has been used as the second critical framework for this study.

A BIOGRAPHICAL MODEL AS A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING CULT IMAGES AND IDOLS

If idols were treated like people with agency by those who worshiped them, and were potentially venerated over several generations, then it is quite fitting to employ a life-cycle, or biographical, approach to studying them. This approach was first advocated by the anthropologist Igor Kopytoff, who recognized that the original value, meaning, and function of commodities seldom remains the same for their different owners, but the biographical approach is now a well-recognized method for understanding archaeological artefacts and artworks.[79] Any object or artwork is created, or "born" to use a biographical term, with one particular function in mind, and is initially understood or valued in one way by its users. Its function, meaning, and value inevitably change over time, or over the course of the object's lifetime. Objects "die" when they are destroyed or discarded. Instead of considering them only in terms of their original intended function, or for a single moment in their lives, the biographical approach allows for a more complete picture of any artefact or artefact type's role in society.

When considered as artefacts with biographies, cult images and idols cease to be works of art frozen in time in a museum's display case, and offer meanings beyond the conventional art historical classifications or interpreted semiotic messages.[80] The form and iconography of idols could only be modified in a limited way, if for example an idol was re-painted, re-carved, dressed in new clothes, or re-housed. But the way it was used, its value to worshipers, and the degree of social agency it possessed, could all change drastically without any modification of its physical form. Thus Roman cult images might initially be made as votive offerings and displayed in a peripheral part of a temple, later rise to the status of idols, and finally be smashed as demon-possessed symbols of a hated enemy religion. The biographical approach to artworks is a very useful way to avoid the museum effect discussed above, in which we concentrate on aspects of an artwork that were not necessarily particularly significant.

It is almost never possible to reconstruct the biography of a single ancient object in any detail. Both archaeological and textual evidence tends to present only a glimpse into a single moment in the biography of a specific cult image. But we can compile evidence to reconstruct the biographies of idols and other cult images as a general category, and thus better understand the phenomenon of idol worship as a whole. This book is structured such that it considers the birth, life and death of idols in broad terms. Not all Roman idols are were born and died at the same moment, and this point is key to understanding the place of cult images and idols in antiquity. Cult images were created and destroyed throughout history, and at any given point, older and newer cult images and idols were present in the temples of the Roman Empire.

Chapters 2 and 3 of this book discuss the origins of cult images, and trends in the types of cult images produced in different periods. Though there is little that can be said about the moment of consecration of individual idols in the Roman world, there is a good deal of evidence for the origin of idol worship and the evolution of the forms that these objects and images took.[81] In Chapters 4 and 5, I will discuss the active lives of idols in the Roman world, both in terms of their placement in temples and their use in rituals. The destruction of idols and their final loss of agency are the subjects of Chapter 6. While these events did not necessarily mark the end of their biographies as objects, the afterlives of cult images as museum pieces and spolia exceeds the scope of this study.

THE STUDY AREA AND SCOPE OF THIS BOOK

At its largest extent, the Roman Empire comprised most of Western and Eastern Europe, all of the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and North Africa, encompassing enormous geographical and ethnic diversity. A full survey of the evidence for idol worship in all of the Roman Empire is obviously not possible in any single book, and the practice in the eastern half of the empire is intricately linked with image worship in earlier Greek religion.

This book concerns the Roman West, and is focused on material from Italy and the city of Rome, the capital and heart of the Roman Empire, and from Roman Gaul and Germany. The latter two regions may be defined roughly as what is now France, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and much of modern Germany. In Roman administrative terms, this includes the four Gauls: *Gallia Narbonensis*, *Aquitania*, *Lugdunensis* and *Belgica*; the two Germanies: *Germania Inferior* and *Superior*, including the territory between the Rhine and the *Limes* known as the *Agri Decumates,* and much of the province of *Raetia*. Where appropriate, I have not hesitated to draw on evidence from Britain and Spain. Taken together, Gaul and Germany alone are a major and representative part of the western Roman Empire. Admittedly, both were quite different from North Africa and even Sicily, but they had much in common with other parts of the Roman Empire in temperate Europe. Within this region there was great physical, historical, and ethnic diversity, but the very same diversity can be found in any other part of Roman Empire as well, including Italy.

The chosen study area incorporates a large part of what is usually referred to as the Romano-Celtic world, that is those parts of the Roman Empire that were originally inhabited by Celtic and Germanic tribes. Throughout this book, I use the terms Celts and Germans for the sake of convenience, but I readily acknowledge the problems inherent in them. Both are labels that were applied by Greeks and Romans to classify northern barbarians, and meant little or nothing to the people they denoted. For Julius Caesar, the Celts lived on the west bank of the Rhine, the Germans on the east, but in reality, things were much more complicated.[82] While the Celts spoke Celtic, and the Germans spoke Germanic languages, the two are often indistinguishable in the archaeological record, and even seem to have shared some customs and practices.

For individuals living in the Iron Age, local tribal identities would have been far more meaningful than the broader ethnic terms of Celt and German. One recent trend has been to describe the prehistoric inhabitants of temperate Europe simply as part of a common "Iron Age" culture, a term which neatly avoids the question of ethnicity and identity while recognizing similarities in customs, practices, and material culture. In Chapter 2, we shall see that one of these shared Iron Age customs, clearly practiced by both Celts and Germans, was the use of cult images.

The very Roman soldiers who conquered Gaul and Germany under Caesar and Augustus were themselves a mixture of different Italic groups that had long since been dominated by Rome. At one level, these soldiers would have perceived of themselves as part of the Roman world, but on another they retained a sense of their original local identity. Such layers of identity were built up very quickly amongst the inhabitants of all Rome's provinces in the imperial period. While the Roman conquest caused a rupture in some religious practices and social structures of the Iron Age, there were also areas of continuity, and above all the adaptation of old customs to fit into the new Roman world. These processes saw the emergence of new native style cult images, as well as the appearance of cults new like that of Mithraism.

This question of ethnic identity in Rome's western provinces has been a major obsession of archaeologists and historians for nearly 30 years, but is not the focus of this book. As a theme, it appears only in Chapter 3, where the transformation of native identity and religion in the Roman Empire is discussed in terms of its relationship to idols and cult images. While the formation of provincial identity in the Roman Empire is not my main concern, I would note that the same sort of ethnic diversity and complexity found in the Romano-Celtic region was a major feature of the entire Roman Empire.

Because of this obsession with questions of identity in the Roman West, and in light of the diversity of sources needed to understand any aspect of Roman religious practice, a very critical reader might suggest that this entire book is a case of mixing apples and oranges, since the traditions of Rome's "barbarian" provinces were very different from those of the "civilized" practices of Rome and Italy. But the same criticism could be made of all but the most localized studies of the Roman Empire, and, in my view, ignores the essentially diverse nature of the Roman world. Moreover, such studies are quite routine for the Greek-speaking world where local traditions were equally present and important. The net result of the Roman Empire was a population in which distinctive local traditions existed, but in which shared trends and structures created a global Roman identity. As such, any study of religious practices within the Roman Empire will encounter similar interactions of diverse ethnic groups and a diversity of sources. The broad processes and structures of idol worship and cult image use found elsewhere will likely be similar to the ones described in these pages.

In chronological terms, this book focuses on the Roman imperial period, but since many idols and cult images of Iron Age Europe and Republican Rome continued to be used in the imperial period, and influenced the form of later cult images, its first chapter begins much earlier. Chapter 6 of this book deals with the destruction of cult images and idols, and is largely concerned with the late antique and early medieval period, though we shall see that some Roman idols were destroyed or disposed of earlier still. Of course, the biographies of cult images as archaeological artefacts continue to be written today in the museums and depots where they are stored, but their lives as idols ended when they ceased to be worshiped and they lost their social agency, and it is at this point that the focus of this book stops.

The many texts, sites, and objects illustrated and described in these pages were selected as examples for the quality of information they can provide about idol worship in the Roman world. I have made no attempt to create a comprehensive catalogue of identifiable idols, even within the limits of the study area. The best textual descriptions of idol worship come from the city of Rome in the first centuries BC and AD, but Gaul and Germany provide better archaeological evidence for idol placement and use. The rich tradition of archaeological excavation and recording in Germany and France has left extensive and often unexploited evidence for cult images of a kind that is not to be found in most Mediterranean parts of the ancient world. If the reader agrees with nothing at all that this book has to say about cult images or idol worship, it is hoped that it will at least have made a large amount of useful information about religion, cult images, and temples in Roman Europe accessible to a much wider audience.

TWO

THE BIRTH OF CULT IMAGES

Early Rome and the Iron Age

In Chapter 1, I argued that the consecration of an image or sacred object was an essential first step for it to obtain the status of an idol, and that treating idols as objects with biographies is a useful method of understanding how their social function changed over time. Idols belong to the broader class of cult images, which includes votive offerings and other temple regalia. But idols, divine objects that possess social agency, are the most potent of the cult images and therefore have the most interesting possible biographies. That biography starts at the moment when an idol is recognized as divine, receives worship, and thus obtains agency, its metaphorical birth.

Unfortunately, we possess virtually no information from the Roman world about the ritual processes by which statues or other objects became divine. There is no evidence for anything like the animation rituals of Egypt, the activation and eye-opening ceremonies of the Near East, or comparable practices known in Hindu India. But that does not mean such rituals did not exist, and the very distinction between different types of cult image that was described in Chapter 1 gives us good reason to think that they did; we simply have no access to them. What we can do is explore the related question of when images of the gods first appeared, which is important to our understanding of Roman cult images as a whole.

This chapter and the next consider the "birth" or introduction of idols and other cult images at Rome and in the territory that would later form her western provinces in this broad sense. In both locations, ancient and modern authors have routinely assumed that there was a single moment when cult images emerged, before which they played no role in religious life. Prior to this moment, the earliest religious practices are assumed to have been aniconic, either using no objects at all, sometimes called "empty space aniconism," or focusing ritual attention on natural and non-figural objects such as stones and trees ("material aniconism").[1] This assumption is an oversimplification, and rests on an ancient tendency to idealize the past, and on a modern tendency to see the development of religion in linear evolutionary phases in which simpler systems are replaced by more complicated ones. In fact, aniconic elements existed in Roman religion simultaneously with iconic worship, and this chapter will show that images of the gods, and probably their worship, began far earlier than is normally assumed.

The chapter begins with the story of Rome's earliest idols. We do have origin stories for several individual idols and cult images found in some of Rome's most important temples, if not information on their initial consecration. Various ancient writers tell us that the worship of cult images began under Rome's Etruscan kings, and that in the four centuries that followed, increasingly lavish cult images and idols became the norm. The oldest idols of clay and wood were gradually replaced by images made of metal, marble, and ivory, much to the disgust of Rome's religious conservatives. In their view, if idols were needed at all, then simple rustic ones were preferable to luxurious foreign imports.[2] These authors adhered to a moralizing narrative that lamented the decline of contemporary Roman religion in the face of an idealized past and simultaneously supported a philosophical disdain for idol worship. This narrative purposely ignored alternative stories in which much older idols were present at Rome.

From Rome, we will turn to pre-Roman Gaul and Germany. There are no recorded origin stories comparable to those of Rome for the cult images of this region, but the same bias against idol worship informed ancient descriptions of Celtic and Germanic practices. Ancient writers tell us that the purer barbarian societies of northern Europe, much like the earliest Romans, needed no figural images of their gods. An apparent absence of cult images in the art and archaeology of north-western Europe has led to the modern belief that all Iron Age religion was strictly aniconic.

But a number of very recent and important discoveries have radically changed our understanding of Iron Age art and left the aniconic theory of early barbarian religion utterly untenable. Much of this chapter is dedicated to an updated survey of Iron Age monumental images of divinities in stone, metal, and wood. Some of these artworks have conventional modern titles that include identifications such as "warrior" and "god," based purely on their appearance, but I will argue here based on their contexts that many of these figural representations depicted either heroes or divinities, and were the subjects of ritual, if not worship.[3] The fact that figural and monumental images of the gods existed much earlier than is normally realized, has profound consequences for our understanding of cult images and idols in the Roman imperial period, the topic of Chapter 3.

THE INTRODUCTION OF CULT IMAGES AT ROME

Modern historians have often described Rome's earliest religion as animistic, being centered around spirits and forces (*numina*) that inhabited natural objects, places, and phenomena. The worship of anthropomorphic gods was seen as a later development that was initiated by contact with the Greeks and Etruscans. Naturally, this primitive form of Roman religion was deemed to be aniconic.[4] In 1911, William Warde Fowler wrote that " . . . we must be quite clear that in those early ages there was nothing in Rome which we can call a temple, as we understand the word; nor was there any such representation of a deity as we can call an image or *eidolon*."[5] This view was supported by passages from texts of the late Republican and imperial periods testifying that the earliest Romans did not possess or need images of their divinities to worship them. The most important of these ancient passages is a fragment of Varro, a first century BC commentator on Roman religion, whose work is preserved in fragments of Saint Augustine's fourth century AD denunciation of idol worship:

> *Dicit etiam antiquos Romanos plus annos centum et septuaginta deos sine simulacro coulisse. "Quod si adhuc," inquit, "mansisset, castius dii observarentur."*
>
> He (Varro) also says that for more than one hundred and seventy years the ancient Romans worshipped the gods without an image (*sine simulacro*). "If this usage had continued to our own day," he says, "our worship of the gods would be more devout."[6]

Plutarch's Life of Numa, which may well have drawn upon Varro as a source, argues that Numa was so influenced by the teachings of Pythagoras that he forbade the worship of images:

> Ἔστι δὲ καὶ τὰ περὶ τῶν ἀφιδρυμάτων νομοθετήματα παντάπασιν ἀδελφὰ τῶν Πυθαγόρου δογμάτων. οὔτε γὰρ ἐκεῖνος αἰσθητὸν ἢ παθητόν, ἀόρατον δὲ καὶ ἄκτιστον καὶ νοητὸν ὑπελάμβανεν εἶναι τὸ πρῶτον, οὗτός τε διεκώλυσεν ἀνθρωποειδῆ καὶ ζῳόμορφον εἰκόνα θεοῦ Ῥωμαίους νομίζειν. οὐδ' ἦν παρ' αὐτοῖς οὔτε γραπτὸν οὔτε πλαστὸν εἶδος θεοῦ πρότερον, ἀλλ' ἐν ἑκατὸν ἑβδομήκοντα τοῖς πρώτοις ἔτεσι ναοὺς μὲν οἰκοδομούμενοι καὶ καλιάδας ἱερὰς ἱστῶντες, ἄγαλμα δὲ οὐδὲν ἔμμορφον ποιούμενοι διετέλουν, ὡς οὔτε ὅσιον ἀφομοιοῦν τὰ βελτίονα τοῖς χείροσιν οὔτε ἐφάπτεσθαι θεοῦ δυνατὸν ἄλλως ἢ νοήσει.
>
> Furthermore, his [Numa's] ordinances concerning images are altogether in harmony with the doctrines of Pythagoras. For that philosopher

> maintained that the first principle of being was beyond sense or feeling, was invisible and uncreated, and discernible only by the mind. And in like manner Numa forbade the Romans to revere an image of God which had the form of man or beast. Nor was there among them in this earlier time any painted or graven likeness of Deity, but while for the first 170 years they were continually building temples and establishing sacred shrines, they made no statues in bodily form for them, convinced that it was impious to liken higher things to lower, and that it was impossible to apprehend Deity except by the intellect.[7]

Plutarch lived in the late first and early second centuries AD and was both a priest at Delphi and a prominent advocate of Platonism, which by this time had incorporated Pythagorean philosophy. By describing Numa as a disciple of Pythagoras, Plutarch was really attaching his own philosophical preferences to the mythological king and his ban on cult images.

The late second and early third century church father Tertullian, after lambasting other pagan superstitions introduced by Numa, admits that early Roman pagan worship was simpler and purer than in his own time:

> *Nam etsi a Numa concepta est curiositas superstitiosa, nondum tamen aut simulacris aut templis res divina apud Romanos constabat. Frugi religio et pauperes ritus et nulla Capitolia certantia ad caelum, sed temeraria de cespite altaria, et vasa adhuc Samia, et nidor ex illis, et deus ipse nusquam.*
>
> For even if superstitious curiosity was invented by Numa, nevertheless, for a while divine business did not rest upon either idols or temples. Religion was frugal, and rituals poor, and no Capitoline temple was vying with the sky, but temporary altars were made of turf and vessels were still Samian [that is, pottery], and from those came a smell [that is, of incense], with the god himself nowhere.[8]

Reckoning from the foundation of Rome in 753 BC, the 170 years without images recorded by Varro would put the introduction of Rome's first cult images in 583 BC. In Roman historical mythology, this date falls within the reign of Tarquinius Priscus (616–578 BC), the first of Rome's three Etruscan kings. Tarquinius Priscus began work on Rome's Capitoline Temple, which received a statue of Jupiter Optimus Maximus by the artist Vulca of Veii, when it was finally consecrated in 509 BC in the reign of Tarquinius Superbus, the last king of Rome.

We know nothing at all about the images of Juno and Minerva that must have accompanied Vulca's work to complete the Capitoline triad. His statue of Jupiter was destroyed and replaced when the temple burned down in 83 BC, but it was probably made of terracotta and depicted the god on a throne.[9] These statues were the most important idols in Rome, so it is perhaps natural that they should also have been considered amongst its oldest, but equally venerable idols were known in the first and second centuries BC. At the time of Pliny the Elder, a "Clay Hercules" (*Hercules Fictilis*) was still worshipped in a temple in Rome's cattle market and was said to be another work of Vulca of Veii.[10]

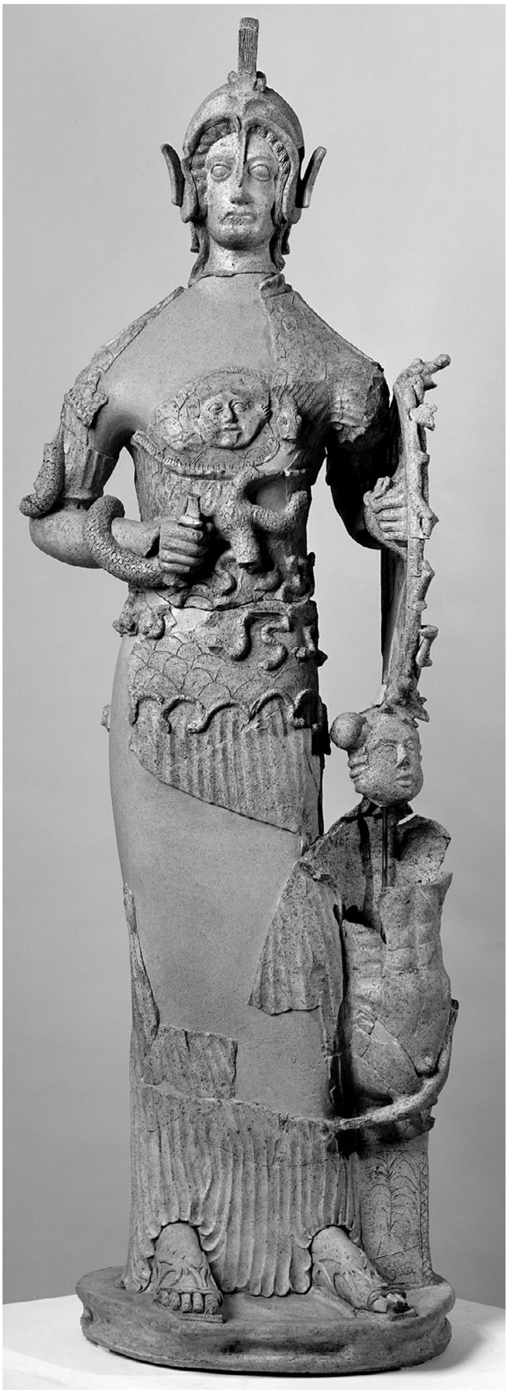
Other statues associated with Rome's Etruscan kings were made of wood. Pliny records a gilded wooden statue of a seated Fortuna in a temple in the Forum Boarium, which he dated to the reign of Servius Tullius (578–535 BC). This statue actually wore that king's *toga praetexta* until it was destroyed in AD 31.[11] Another wooden statue representing Diana was dedicated on the Aventine by the same king.[12] In his book on trees, Pliny comments that images of the gods were made of wood (*arborea et simulacra numinum fuere*) before luxurious ivory was used, a medium which, he sarcastically notes, was now also used for table legs.[13] Ailsa Hunt has suggested that the use of "*arborea*" in this passage implies that these early images were not merely wooden, but were even treelike in form.[14] Whatever their form, we shall see in this chapter that the importance of wood as a medium in the history of Roman sculpture has been overlooked.

Whether clay or wooden, the general implication of these ancient texts is that the Romans adopted cult images and idol worship from the Etruscans, who dominated the city in the sixth century BC. This seems to agree with Varro's statement. Etruscan art would certainly play a role in the development of Roman Republican artistic traditions, but is there any archaeological evidence to confirm this idea of the Etruscans introducing images of the gods and image worship?

In a recent review of ritual structures in Latium and Etruria from the tenth to sixth centuries BC, Charlotte Potts saw the absence of cult image bases and niches within temple structures, and of alignments between altars, temple doors, and bases, as evidence in favor of early aniconic worship.[15] But such absences are not conclusive proof that idols did not exist. The display of light wooden and terracotta statues need not have required large bases that would have left a mark in the archaeological record, and other images of the gods may have been worshiped outdoors or in settings that we do not immediately recognize as temples. More importantly, as Potts herself recognized, the presence of aniconic worship at some sites does not forcibly exclude the existence of iconic worship elsewhere. As we shall see in Chapter 4, archaeological evidence for idol bases, or for the placement of any kind of cult image, is very rare, even in later periods when images of the gods were common.

Etruscan art was heavily influenced by Greek art, but the Etruscans also developed their own tradition of monumental terracotta sculpture that is well attested archaeologically, and justly admired. But most surviving Etruscan terracotta representations of gods, such as the famous "Apollo of Veii" (or perhaps the Etruscan Aplu), were architectural decoration rather than free-standing cult statues or the obvious recipients of worship. The archaeological evidence for early idols in Rome, Latium and Etruria is disappointingly sparse, whether in the form of statues themselves or in representations of cult statues in Etruscan art.[16]

Perhaps the most plausible candidate for a non-architectural Etruscan cult image is the over life-sized statue of Minerva (or her Etruscan equivalent Menerva) that was found at a temple site in Lavinium (**Fig. 2.1**), and is usually dated to the late fifth century BC on purely stylistic grounds.[17] Unlike the Apollo of Veii, the over life-sized statue was made to stand on its own. Originally covered in colored paint, the frontal composition stands on a round base in a static pose. The goddess's large almond-shaped eyes are set in an elongated archaic face, with knobs of hair protruding from under her helmet. The iconography is that of a Greek Athena, including the helmet and aegis, and holding a shield covered with snakes supported by a small depiction of Triton.[18] Whether it was a votive offering or the temple's idol is unknown, but the statue provides some sense of what Rome's earliest Etruscan idols might have looked like.



2.1 Terracotta Minerva from Lavinium. H. 1.96 m. (Arachne, http://arachne.uni-koeln.de/item/marbilder/690962, photo: B. Malter)

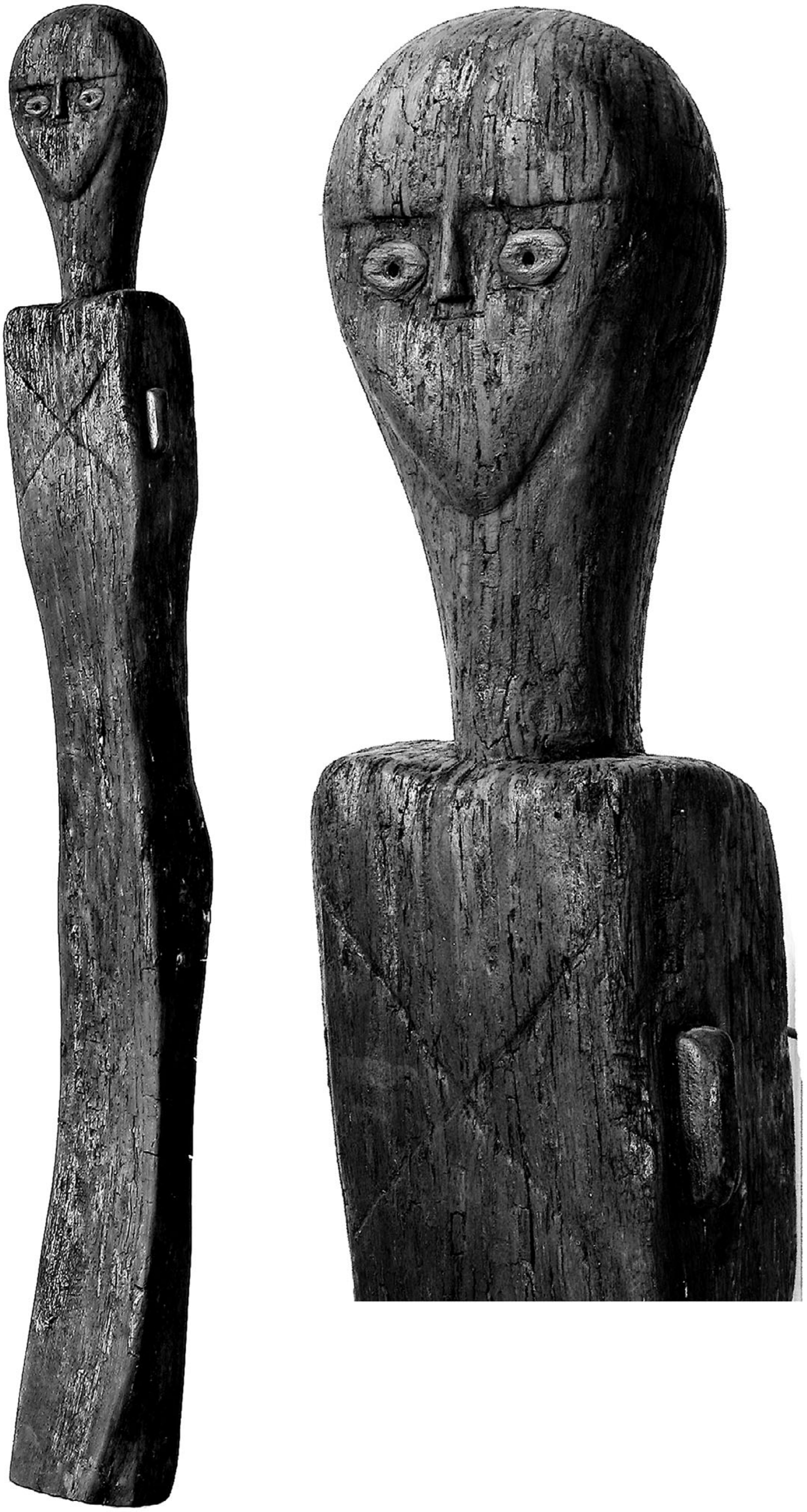
A group of wooden statues found in the Ansanto Valley (Valle d'Ansanto, near Rocca San Felice) and traditionally attributed to the Italic goddess Mefitis, may be contemporary with Rome's earliest wooden images, but it is not entirely clear whether they represent worshipers, Mefitis herself, or some other divinity. The sculptures, and numerous other objects, were found near a sulfurous pool that emits noxious gases, and were thus connected to Mefitis, an Italic agricultural goddess who was also associated with foul-smelling waters. Ranging in height from 10 cm to over 1 m, they are all post-like human representations, with the sex of the figures identifiable, but little else. The faces are crude, with the brow and nose forming a T, and with large oval protruding eyes (**Fig. 2.2**). The wooden figures from the Ansanto Valley are typically dated between the sixth and fifth centuries BC, and if this dating is correct, the carvings still do little more than confirm the reports of ancient texts that wooden statues actually existed in early Italy.[19]

The way the trunk of the tree forms the dominant torso of the Ansanto Valley sculptures could certainly be connected to Pliny's comment on treelike early wooden statues (*arborea simulacra*) mentioned above. The overall appearance of these wooden sculptures could have been greatly augmented and modified by detachable clothing and other attributes, as was the case with very similar wooden idols from the Germanic and Celtic world, and as is described in the case of the statue of Vertumnus at Rome (see below).

Whereas the archaeological evidence for idols in early Rome is poor, the textual evidence is rich, with ancient authors paying special attention to the mythological connections of some images, changes in the materials habitually used in statues of divinities, and the import of foreign practices. **Table 2** presents a summary of Rome's earliest cult images as they are known from textual sources. Thus the first bronze cult image recorded in Rome was a Ceres whose temple on the Aventine was dedicated in 493 BC, but the use of metal for a cult image at this very early date was exceptional.[20] Pliny informs us that prior to the conquest of Asia, and with it the introduction of luxury to Rome, the majority of the city's idols were made of terracotta or wood.[21] Pliny expresses a preference for these idols of simpler and purer materials, writing of the Capitoline Jupiter and Hercules Fictilis:

> *Hae enim tum effigies deorum erant lautissimae, nec paenitet nos illorum, qui tales eos coluere; aurum enim et argentum ne diis quidem conficiebant. Durant etiam nunc plerisque in locis talia simulacra; . . . sanctiora auro, certe innocentiora.*
>
> For these were the most splendid images of the gods at that time, and we are not ashamed of those ancestors who worshipped them in that material. For they did not work gold or silver even for the gods. Even today idols of this kind remain in many places . . . holier than gold, and certainly more innocent.[22]

Nor was Pliny alone in this view. Cato the Elder's speech against the repeal of the Oppian Law in 195 BC, as it is presented by Livy, lamented the presence of luxurious Greek artworks in Rome, and the scorn that they caused to be poured upon older and more Roman terracotta statues: "I prefer these gods, who are propitious to us, and I trust that they will continue to be if we allow them to remain in their own dwellings."[23] Even after the Second Punic War, the Roman



2.2 One of the larger wooden representations of Dea Mefitis (?), from the Ansanto Valley. H. 1.35 m. (Photo: Museo Irpino)

TABLE 2 *The earliest cult images of Rome*

Statue	Date	Origins	Main sources
Hercules triumphalis	Ca. 1244 BC	Dedicated by Evander. Stood near the Ara Maxima.	Pliny 34.33
Two-faced Janus	Numa	Dedicated by Numa, fingers denote days of the year.	Pliny 34.34
Vertumnus	Titus Tatius	A maple image, from reign of Romulus or Titus Tatius. Replaced with a bronze image by Marmurius Verturius.	Prop. 4.2; Ov. Fast.; Varro *Ling*. 5.74
Terminus	Pre-Tarquinius Priscus	Aniconic stone? Refuses to leave Capitoline Hill.	Ov. Fast. 2.639–685
Diana on the Aventine	578–534 BC	Wooden. Commissioned by Servius Tullius.	Dion. Hal. 4.26.2–4; Zonar. 7.9.11; Aur. Vict. De Vir. ill. 7.9. Martin 15 and 20, note 96; Latte 150
Fortuna in the Forum Boarium	578–534 BC	Wooden, seated and gilded. Wore the toga praetexta of Servius Tullius.	Pliny 8.197; Martin, 15, 21–31; Val. Max 1.8.11), Dion. Hal. 4.40.7
Jupiter Optimus Maximus in the Capitoline Temple	Late 6th century BC	Commissioned by Tarquinius Superbus from Vulca of Veii. Clay.	Pliny 35.152 and 157; Martin 1987, 14–15, 28–31 with numerous ancient references
Hercules "Fictilis" in Forum Boarium	Late 6th century BC	By Vulca of Veii. Clay.	Pliny 34.10
Ceres in temple of Ceres, Liber and Libera	493 BC	Bronze.	Livy 2.32.3–4; Pliny 35.158
Juno Regina	391 BC	Taken by *evocatio* from Veii.	Livy 5.21.3 and 22.6–7; Plut. Cam. 6.1; Val. Max 1.8.3, Dion. Hal. 13.3.2
Magna Mater	205 BC	Brought from Pessinus as black stone.	Ov. Fast. 2.639–85

Republic had nothing to compare in splendor with the colossal acroliths of Phidias in Olympia and Athens, which had been made more than 200 years previously. Hanz Günther Martin has proposed that the prolonged use of terracotta and wood for images of the gods at Rome, when other more expensive materials were readily available and were already used for other genres, such as honorific statues and portraits, was due to the conservative and traditional nature of Roman religion.[24] But this conservativism did not last forever.

The import of foreign cult images to Rome certainly began before the conquest of Asia. In 264 BC, Rome took some 2,000 statues from the Etruscan city of Volsinii, amongst which we must assume were both idols and other cult images.[25] War with other Etruscan and Italic cities also resulted in the acquisition of new idols for the city of Rome through the rite of *evocatio*. Two versions of this formulaic prayer are preserved in Macrobius, both of which involve a Roman general calling upon the gods of an enemy to abandon the temples and city in which they are housed and to come to Rome, where they are promised temples and games. Macrobius states that the rite of *evocatio* was employed against numerous enemy cities in Italy and throughout the Roman Empire, but only one detailed instance is known to us.[26] Livy relates how the goddess Juno Regina was called upon by the Roman dictator M. Furius Camillus to abandon the city of Veii in 396 BC, and then describes the removal of the idol itself from the defeated city:[27]

> *Cum iam humanae opes egestae a Veiis essent, amoliri tum deum dona ipsosque deos, sed colentium magis quam rapientium modo, coepere. Namque delecti ex omni exercitu iuvenes, pure lautis corporibus, candida veste, quibus deportanda Romam regina Iuno adsignata erat, venerabundi templum iniere, primo religiose admoventes manus, quod id signum more Etrusco nisi certae gentis sacerdos attractare non esset solitus. Dein cum quidam seu spiritu divino tactus seu iuvenali ioco, "Visne Romam ire, Iuno?" dixisset, adnuisse ceteri deam conclamaverunt. Inde fabulae adiectum est vocem quoque dicentis velle auditam; motam certe sede sua parvi molimenti adminiculis, sequentis modo accepimus levem ac facilem tralatu fuisse, integramque in Aventinum aeternam sedem suam quo vota Romani dictatoris vocaverunt perlatam, ubi templum ei postea idem qui voverat Camillus dedicavit.*
>
> When all the property of value belonging to men had been taken from Veii, work began on the removal of what belonged to the gods – the temple treasures and the divine images themselves. It was done with the deepest reverence; young soldiers were specially chosen for the task of conveying Queen Juno to Rome; having washed their bodies and dressed themselves in white, they entered her temple in awe, and shrank at first from what seemed to be the sacrilege of laying hands upon an image, which Etruscan religion forbade anyone except the holder of a certain hereditary priesthood to touch. Suddenly one of them said: 'Juno, do you want to go to Rome?' Whether the question was divinely inspired or merely a young man's joke, who knows? But his companions all declared that the statue nodded its head in reply. We are told, too, that words were uttered, signifying assent. In any case – fables apart – she was moved from her place with only the slightest application of mechanical power, and was light and easy to transport – almost as if she came of her own free will – and was taken undamaged to her eternal dwelling-place on the Aventine, whither the dictator had called her in his prayer. And there Camillus afterwards dedicated to her the temple he had vowed in prayer.[28]

It is easy to imagine the place of *evocatio* in establishing the legitimacy of new idols in Rome. This sort of origin story distracted from the perception of idols as man-made objects by connecting them to early historical events. In its former home, the foreign idol's agency was already accepted, so no further justification was needed to generate agency in Rome. The story of its decision to move to Rome further reinforced the idea of the idol as an active participant in human affairs.

Other cults, and with them their cult images, were introduced to early Rome in response to prodigies, oracles, and other state emergencies. The cult of Aesculapius was imported from Epidaurus in response to a plague in 291 BC and established on the Tiber Island. Though the ambassadors sent to Epidaurus to collect the god explicitly failed to obtain the idol of Aesculapius, they brought back a serpent in which the god was believed to reside.[29] As Hannibal terrorized Italy in 205 BC, the Sybilline books advised the Romans to import the cult of Magna Mater from Pessinus. The goddess, this time in the form of an aniconic black stone, was transported to Rome and established on the Palatine, housed at first in the temple of Victory, and, after 191 BC, in a temple of her own. The stone was later incorporated into an anthropomorphic statue in which it formed the face of the idol.[30] The movement of a physical cult object from one place to another was a way of transferring these foreign cults to Rome and maintaining their legitimacy, while also connecting them with the divinity in his or her original location.

Many of the statues taken by Rome's generals were placed on display in the city's temples alongside other works of art, serving as offerings and temple ornaments rather than idols. These same generals also constructed new temples, or renovated old ones, and this would, of course, have sometimes necessitated the creation of new idols. If no captured artwork was used for the purpose, then new idols had to be made, and these would most likely have followed the luxurious pattern of the captured artworks of marble, bronze, precious metal, and ivory.[31]

In 211 BC, the same year that the Senate was obliged to identify divine images amongst the statues taken from Capua (see Chapter 1), M. Marcellus brought an unprecedented collection of plundered Greek statues from Syracuse to Rome. More conservative Romans were shocked both by luxury of the representations, and by the fact that the gods were displayed in Marcellus' triumph as if they were ordinary captured slaves. Fabius Maximus, by contrast, had refused to plunder the cult images of Tarentum.[32] Nonetheless, the practice of bringing statues of the gods to Rome as plunder became standard. The loot from Ambracia collected by Marcus Fulvius Nobilior in 189 BC included cult images (*agalmata*), and presumably so too did the thousands of works taken from Corinth by Lucius Mummius in 146 BC[33] From the Second Punic War on, the new elegant and shiny idols of Rome, alongside the captured artworks displayed in the city's temples, must have utterly outdone the older images in clay and wood in the eyes of temple visitors.

To sum up, ancient writers present a picture in which the earliest Romans required no cult images, adopted terracotta and wooden images from the Etruscans in the sixth century BC, and only much later imported idols of marble and other precious (luxurious) materials from the Greek world. These idols were commissioned by mythical and historical leaders, imported from abroad on special divine orders, summoned out of enemy cities through the process of *evocatio*, or were commissioned as a result of vows. The development of image worship is portrayed as softening process in which Roman religion descended from its past glory and rigor into its current state of decadence.

Our sources for these developments date largely from second century BC to the first century AD, and all are well known for projecting the contemporary interests of the late Republic and early imperial period upon the distant Roman past.[34] Ultimately, the fact that luxurious images succeeded in supplanting images of clay and wood shows that the old-fashioned preferences of these later Roman historians were not really shared by the majority of the people. It seems to me that the emphasis of these later accounts on aniconic religion in early Rome are really a function of the same sort of moralizing attitude toward cult statues. If we look at these sources more closely, we find that the very same writers provide us with contradictory information about the earliest cult images in Rome.

To begin with, if Rome's earliest religious environment was indeed utterly devoid of idols and the desire to worship them, why did Numa need to forbid them at all? By the reign of Tarquinius Superbus, the city already contained numerous temples and sacred enclosures, including several on the Capitoline hill that it was necessary to re-locate so that a new Capitoline temple could be constructed.[35] While the other divinities on the Capitoline were willing to leave their homes, the god Terminus was not, and both his temple and idol were eventually incorporated into the new Capitoline temple. As in the fields surrounding Rome, where Terminus was worshiped outdoors in the form of a boundary stone, his new temple was left exposed to heaven by an opening in the roof's temple.[36] This story implies a movement of consenting idols, whether anthropomorphic or aniconic, that is similar to the *evocatio* of Juno from Veii. Moreover, it shows that quite old idols existed even at this earliest point in Rome's history.

Another of Rome's earliest cult centres, the Temple of Vesta, initially contained no anthropomorphic idol and was centered on the sacred fire and hearth of the city. But the temple was also the home of the Palladium, one of Rome's most sacred relics, represented as a small anthropomorphic statue of Minerva on coins and in later Roman art. The Palladium was said to have been brought to Rome from Troy, a city to which the statue had miraculously fallen from heaven.[37] While it is questionable whether the Palladium should be counted as an idol or a sort of relic, it was nonetheless a figural image of a divinity connected to Rome's earliest mythical past. Nor is the Palladium's supposed antiquity and mythological connection unique.

Other cult images are described by Roman writers as having been acquired or made much earlier than the reign of Tarquinius Priscus. Pliny mentions a statue called the *Hercules Triumphalis* in the Forum Boarium that was dedicated by the mythical king Evander, who brought the Greek alphabet to Italy and lived before the Trojan War.[38] Pliny attributed a four-faced terracotta statue of Janus to king Numa.[39] According to Propertius, the *signum* of the Etruscan god Vertumnus was originally a wooden idol (*stipes arcenus*) that was brought to Rome before Numa's time, and according to Varro dated to the reign of the Sabine king Titus Tatius. Under Numa, the wooden Vertumnus was replaced by a bronze statue made by the legendary craftsman Mamurius Verturius.[40] While the authenticity of these dates is questionable, the attribution of these statues to Evander and Numa suggests the existence of alternative historical traditions in which cult images had a place in Roman religion long before the period of the Etruscan kings.

Whatever their historical value, the very fact that Roman authors cared to preserve the origin stories of their city's cult images is important. It suggests that the antiquity of any idol or cult image, as well as the mythology around it, contributed in no small measure to its acquisition of agency. Moreover, it seems that some idols remained in active use for hundreds of years in Rome, allowing mythical stories about them to build up. Just as Pausanias sought out the older works in Greek temples, Livy, Pliny and other authors concentrated on idols with pedigrees and connections to important historical figures and events. As a result, the surviving textual evidence for cult images is highly selective, and one cannot help but wonder whether smaller and less important cult images have not been neglected, or what role familial religion played in the process. Presumably lesser idols also had origin stories that are simply lost to us.

The apparent explosion of cult images following an aniconic phase of Roman religion that is presented by some texts is neither consistent nor particularly believable. It is part of a pattern in which Roman writers presented the past as simpler and better, and is influenced, at least in Plutarch's case, by a philosophical preference for worship without the aid of images.[41] At the very least, figural images of the gods as well as aniconic idols seem to have existed in archaic Rome, though how many of them were the subject of worship is something we will never know.[42] The later veneration of aniconic and natural idols in the imperial period is another matter, and one that we will revisit in the next chapter.

Finally, it should be noted that since the time of Winckelmann, a very similar narrative of aniconism evolving into figural representation has been conventional wisdom for the Greek world as well.[43] As at Rome, this narrative is based largely on the reports of ancient texts, of which the most important is the second century AD travel writer Pausanias, who commented that "At a more remote period all the Greeks alike worshiped uncarved stones instead of images of the gods."[44] Milette Gaifman has argued that the connection of Greek aniconic worship with the distant past was part of an ancient literary discourse that placed the earliest Greek practices and those of foreigners, the Persians and Scythians, in the same basket.[45] This discourse had much less to do with historical fact than it did with understanding the liminal place of aniconic worship as a different but acceptable form of cult in contemporary Greek society. By creating a fictional history of image and object worship, the Greeks made the practice understandable. When uncarved stones stood side-by-side with conventional images of the gods, the aniconic idols "offered a frame of reference for the figural, revealing through contrast both its allure and limitations."[46] Perhaps more importantly still, such a fictional history would have deflected attention from issues surrounding the legitimacy and agency of Greek idols, whether they were anthropomorphic or not.

From Greece and Italy we may turn now to the evidence for the earliest images and idols amongst Rome's western barbarians, the Celts and Germans. Here too we will find Greek and Roman ethnographers presenting the very same bias against figural images of the gods, and modern historians once again unquestioningly accepting their evidence to construct a model of aniconic religion in the pre-Roman Iron Age. Cult image worship is routinely described as an introduction brought by the more civilized Romans. The situation would be an exact parallel to that of early Greece and Rome, were it not for the fact that some very recent archaeological discoveries have radically changed the picture for Iron Age art in Gaul and Germany, and augment the largely textual evidence for early cult images in the Mediterranean world.

THE ANICONIC THEORY OF IRON AGE CELTIC AND GERMANIC RELIGION

There are three main sources of evidence for pre-Roman native religion in Western Europe: the anecdotal reports of Greek and Roman writers, the medieval accounts of the practices in Celtic and Germanic areas that were never occupied by the Romans, notably Ireland and Scandinavia, and, finally, a large number of stone monuments with images of divinities and inscriptions that date to the Roman period, but that seem to reflect Iron Age traditions. The ancient texts are problematic because they present the views of one culture looking at another, while the medieval texts date to a much later time period and often reflect very distant regions. The stone monuments are also suspect since the vast majority of them were made in the mid-second to early third centuries AD, when "native" religion had undoubtedly changed in form and function. Moreover, these stone monuments are often altars, statues, or reliefs that were produced as a result of private vows – a very Roman ritual procedure.[47] Thus Roman period images of "native" Celtic and Germanic divinities are often seen as later inventions – artworks for which new iconographic conventions were invented to allow divinities that had never before been represented in art to appear in anthropomorphic form in Roman-style sculptural monuments. This concept of Roman invention is supported by the assumption that images of divinities simply did not exist in the pre-Roman Iron Age.[48] This may be termed the "aniconic theory" of Iron Age religion, and its validity will be addressed here. The implications of the aniconic theory for Roman period art, and the supposed invention of Celtic imagery, is dealt with in the next chapter.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the great authorities on the Iron Age world, figures like Salomon Reinach, Camille Jullian, Joseph Déchelette, and Paul Jacobsthal, all concurred that Iron Age art was essentially ornamental, with a total absence of cult images.[49] Reinach even went so far as to propose that in the Celtic world a prohibition of cult images was enforced by the druids, who had themselves been inspired the philosophy of Pythagoras and the religious teachings of King Numa. This notion of Pythagorean influence in Celtic religion was derived from two late antique texts, and is now held to have no merit.[50]

The aniconic theory of Iron Age religion, however, remained current well into the twentieth century. M. J. T. Lewis' important 1966 book on Romano-Celtic temples opened its chapter on the origins of the temple type with a sweeping statement that echoes Fowler's view of early Roman religion:

> Celtic religion was essentially aniconic and atectonic. The Celts worshipped ubiquitous invisible forces of nature in the open air, venerating such objects as standing stones, mountains and streams . . . They neither needed nor desired houses for their gods or images of them, apart from occasional carvings on menhirs.[51]

Lewis was concerned with the development of the Romano-Celtic temple, and in his day there was indeed little evidence for pre-Roman temples in Britain, but his views are nonetheless indicative of the prevailing sentiment about Iron Age art and religion and images. That same sentiment can be found in a 1965 article by Harald von Petrikovits on the form of certain female Celtic divinities in Roman art:

> Only when Gaul and the other Celtic-influenced lands first became part of the Roman Empire, and aligned both their civilization and religious practices with Rome, would images of the native gods be created for many large and small sanctuaries by Roman and Greek artists and sculptors, as well as their native students and apprentices.[52]

The aniconic theory of Celtic and Germanic religion rests on three main foundations: the observations of three ancient authors on Iron Age (Germanic and Celtic) religion, an assumption that all primitive religion undergoes a phase in which it is both naturalistic and aniconic, and, most importantly, a supposed lack of pre-Roman cult images in the archaeological record. As we shall see, not one of these foundations is stable, and there is good evidence that anthropomorphic cult images were made and venerated by Celts and Germans prior to the arrival of the Romans. It was these pre-Roman images that provided the impetus for later depictions of "native" divinities in Roman period art. We will deal with the first two foundations of the aniconic theory briefly before returning to focus on the third in more detail.

The Textual Evidence

A survey of Greek and Latin literature on the religious practices of the Celts and Germans will find evidence both for and against the existence of images of divinities, but with the preponderance of texts affirming the presence of images of the gods in Iron Age society. We may start by exploring the negative evidence to which so much importance was been attached. In the same way that Varro, Plutarch, and Tertullian claimed that the earliest Romans lacked cult images, some Greek and Roman authors present a naturalistic and imageless picture of Celtic and Germanic religion. Tacitus' description of Germanic religion is perhaps the most illustrative:

> *Ceterum nec cohibere parietibus deos neque in ullam humani oris speciem adsimulare ex magnitudine caelestium arbitrantur: lucos ac nemora consecrant deorumque nominibus appellant secretum illud, quod sola reverentia vident.*
>
> Apart from this they deem it incompatible with the majesty of the heavenly host to confine the gods within walls, or to mould them into any likeness of the human face: they consecrate groves and coppices, and they give the divine names to that mysterious something which is visible only to the eyes of faith.[53]

A similar sentiment was expressed by Caesar in his description of the Germans, though there is no direct mention of an absence of cult images:

> *Deorum numero eos solos ducunt, quos cernunt et quorum aperte opibus iuvantur, Solem et Vulcanum et Lunam, reliquos ne fama quidem acceperunt.*
>
> The only beings they recognize as gods are things that they can see, and by which they are obviously benefited, such as Sun, Moon and Fire; the other gods they have never even heard of.[54]

Both of the above passages have been cited as equally applicable to Celtic religion.[55] For an absence of cult images amongst the Celts, the first century BC historian Diodorus Siculus relates an episode from the Gallic invasion of Greece in 279 BC when the Gauls encountered the cities and monuments of the civilized Mediterranean:

> Ὅτι Βρέννος ὁ τῶν Γαλατῶν βασιλεὺς εἰς ναὸν ἐλθὼν ἀργυροῦν μὲν ἢ χρυσοῦν οὐδὲν εὗρεν ἀνάθημα, ἀγάλματα δὲ μόνον λίθινα καὶ ξύλινα καταλαβὼν κατεγέλασεν ὅτι θεοὺς ἀνθρωπομόρφους εἶναι δοκοῦντες ἵστασαν αὐτοὺς ξυλίνους τε καὶ λιθίνους.
>
> Brennus, the king of the Gauls, on entering a temple found no dedications of gold and silver, and when he came only upon images (*agalmata*) of stone and wood he laughed at them, to think that men, believing that gods have human forms, should set up their images in wood and stone.[56]

These three passages have been enormously influential, while the contradictory textual evidence that affirms the existence of idols amongst these western barbarians has been largely ignored. Yet in the very same ethnographic section of the Gallic War quoted above, Caesar names the gods worshiped by the Celts along with their Roman equivalents, beginning with the following statement:

> *Deum maxime Mercurium colunt. Huius sunt plurima simulacra: hunc omnium inventorem artium ferunt, hunc viarum atque itinerum ducem, hunc ad quaestus pecuniae mercaturasque habere vim maximam arbitrantur.*
>
> The god they reverence most is Mercury. They have many images of him, and they regard him as the inventor of all arts, the god who directs men on their journeys, and the most powerful helper in trading and getting money.[57]

Evidently the Gauls had at least some images that represented a god whom Caesar equated with the Roman god Mercury. Caesar's choice of the term *simulacra* even suggests that we are dealing with worshipped idols. A passage from Lucan's epic poem on the Roman Civil War, written about 100 years later, narrates an episode in which Caesar encountered a sacred wood in the territory of Massalia (Marseille):

> *. . . Tum plurima nigris*
> *Fontibus unda cadit, simulacraque maesta deorum*
> *Arte carent caesisque extant informia truncis.*
> *Ipse situs putrique facit iam robore pallor*
> *Attonitos; non volgatis sacrata figuris*
> *Numina sic metuunt: tantum terroribus addit,*
> *Quos timeant, non nosse deos. . . .*
>
> Water, also, fell there in abundance from dark springs. The images of the gods, grim and rude, were uncouth blocks formed of felled tree-trunks. Their mere antiquity and the ghastly hue of their rotten timber struck terror; men feel less awe of deities worshipped under familiar forms; so

> much does it increase their sense of fear, not to know the gods whom they dread.[58]

Clearly there is a good deal of poetic imagery here, and the episode certainly belongs to the literary *topoi* of a *locus horridus* and the sacrilegious destruction of a sacred site, but commentators on Lucan have been loath to dismiss the event's factual accuracy outright, and it is clear that sacred woods did play a part in Celtic and Germanic religion.[59] In this instance, the wood is filled with images of the gods, even if they are crude wooden images that lack artistic merit, they are nonetheless *simulacra*.

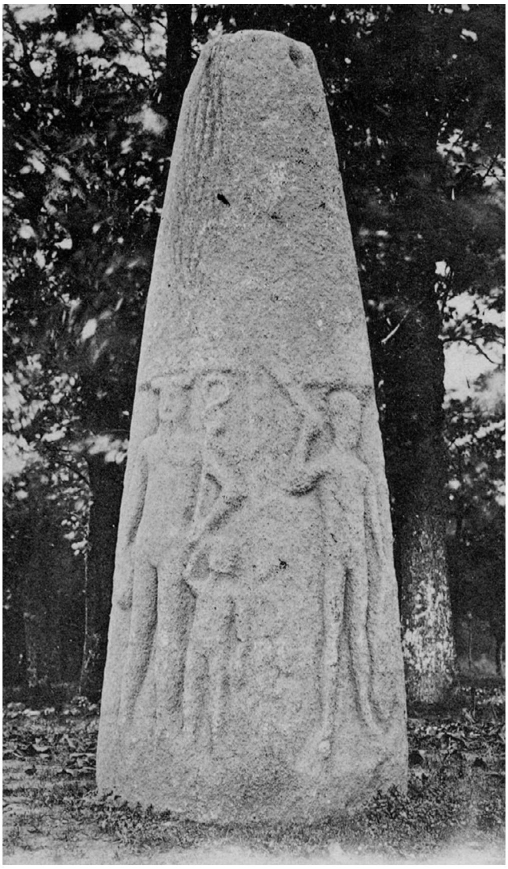
Like Caesar, Tacitus also contradicts his own generalizing statement about Germanic temples and cult images in the *Germania*. In the very same section on the lack of cult images amongst the Germans that was quoted above, he tells us that some of the Suebi worshiped the goddess Isis with an image of fashioned in the form of a ship (*signum ipsum in modum liburnae figuratum*).[60] Tacitus assumed the cult of the Egyptian goddess was a foreign introduction to the Germans, perhaps as an explanation of the contradiction, but it seems more likely that he was misidentifying a Germanic divinity, or equating her with a known Mediterranean equivalent.[61]

Nor was the Suebian goddess a well-known exception to his generalizing statement on aniconism that needed explaining away, for amongst the Langobardi, Anglii, and other tribes who inhabited the area around the north of the Elbe River and in Jutland, Tacitus describes the worship of a goddess named Nerthus, whose cult also seems to have involved the use of an idol. Normally, we are told, the goddess resided in a sacred grove on an island in the ocean, but was occasionally brought forth to travel amongst the tribes. On these occasions she was conveyed in a sacred wagon, and was shielded from public view by curtains. While Nerthus was abroad, a universal truce was honored by the Germans until she returned to her island. At that point, the wagon and its curtains were washed in a lake by slaves who were subsequently drowned in the same body of water. Perhaps with a touch of disappointment Tacitus notes that: "The result is a mysterious fear and a sacred ignorance about something seen only by those doomed to die."[62] Whether Nerthus was a natural object, such as a sacred stone, or a carved figural image, is unimportant. She seems to have been a physical object rather an abstract natural force, and as Gell has noted, aniconic idols effectively serve the same social function as iconic ones.[63]

In addition to Nerthus and the sacred wood near Massalia, Polybius, Caesar, and Tacitus all write of Celtic and Germanic military standards to which religious significance was attached. In the Po valley, Polybius described golden standards known as the "immovables" that the Insubrii brought out of a temple of Minerva before a battle with the Romans in 223 BC[64] Caesar mentions an oath ritual of the Gauls that involved raised standards, which they considered to be their most serious ceremony.[65] In the *Germania*, Tacitus mentions standards brought from sacred forests by the Germans and their belief that they were accompanied by their gods in battle, though the nature of the standards is not described.[66] In the *Histories*, however, Tacitus mentions images of wild beasts (*ferarum imagines*) that the Batavians brought out of sacred forests and used as standards in their revolt of AD 69.[67] Though perhaps not idols in the strictest sense, these military standards seem to have enjoyed a similar status, not unlike the standards of Roman military units, which were kept in a special shrine in the central building (*principia*) of Roman camps.[68] In Chapter 5 we shall see that possible candidates for Celtic animal standards have been identified at Neuvy-en-Sullias, an important temple hoard that also included other portable cult images.

Finally, some medieval texts record the presence of idols in temples in those parts of the Celtic and Germanic world that were never conquered by Rome. A late ninth-century Gaelic account of Saint Patrick's fifth-century exploits describes his encounter with the gold and silver colored idol called Cenn Cruiach, which was the chief idol of Ireland and was accompanied by twelve other idols of bronze.[69] In AD 922, the Abbasid ambassador to the Volga Bulgars, Ibn Fadln, encountered what may have been Viking traders worshiping wooden posts with faces to which they gave offerings, and in the late eleventh century, Adam of Bremen described the idols found in the temple at Uppsala. These narratives are the earliest of many reports of idol worship by medieval Christian missionaries working in the Viking and Slavic worlds.[70] Even if we ignore the much later date of these reports, they are dubious sources for pre-Roman Celtic and Germanic religion. Iron Age society was by no means static, and would certainly have changed over the centuries, at least in some part because of exposure to the Roman Empire and later the medieval world.

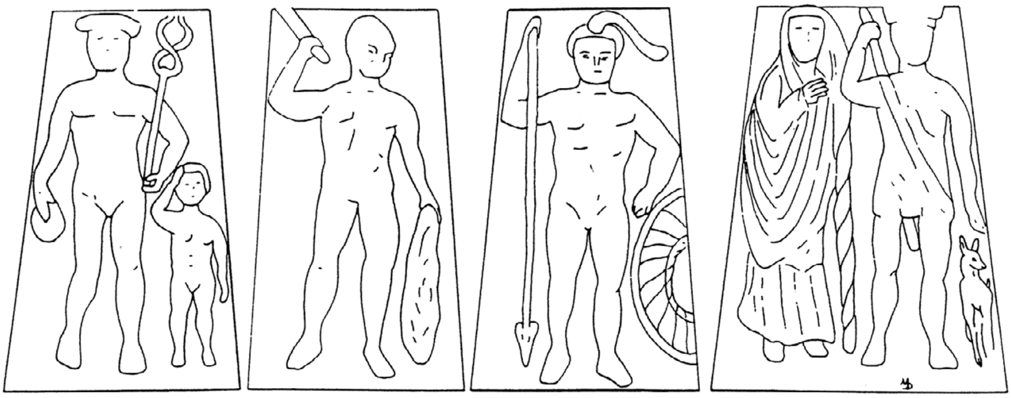
Of course, the passages of Caesar and Lucan cited above presented a real problem to the proponents of the aniconic theory. Joseph Déchelette, one of the fathers of French prehistory, proposed that Caesar and Lucan must have referred to practical objects with figural decoration, while others suggested uncarved stones, trees, and other natural objects.[71] Salomon Reinach thought that Caesar had seen uncarved stone menhirs and equated them with Greek herms and thence Mercury, pointing to the Menhir of Kernuz (**Fig. 2.3**) as proof of this theory.[72] This 3.0 m high prehistoric standing stone was embellished with relief carvings of four divinities in the Roman period, including an easily recognizable representation of Mercury (**Fig. 2.4**).[73] While the monument is an important one (we will re-visit it in the next chapter), it is quite unique, and there is no real similarity between the prehistoric menhirs of Europe and the herms of the Greek world. Nor does the existence of aniconic idols in the Iron Age disprove the possibility of figural ones. Even Reinach and Déchelette were forced to admit that the term *simulacra* used by Caesar normally denoted a figural image.



2.3 The Menhir of Kernuz. The prehistoric monolith (H. 3.0 m) was augmented with four relief carvings (H. 1.30 m) of divinities in the Roman period. (From a ca. 1895 postcard by J. Villard)

Ancient ethnographic descriptions of barbarian societies are intrinsically problematic. Not only were they written by non-Celts and non-Germans, but they also belong to the literary traditions of wealthy Roman aristocrats who had a philosophical and political agenda of their own. Tacitus, for example, is often seen as extolling the toughness of the Germans in order to explain Rome's failure to extend her boundaries as far as the Elb, while Greek and Roman ethnographies frequently contrast the virtues of primitives with the decadence of civilized urban societies.[74] Caesar similarly desired to present the Celts as a worthy and dangerous adversary in order to accentuate and justify his own military exploits. So are all reports of barbarian behavior from Mediterranean authors completely untrustworthy? Certainly not.

Caesar and his army spent eight years in Gaul, where they met, fought, and negotiated with real Celts and Germans. Tacitus may well have worked on the Rhine himself, and his lifetime saw numerous important events in the German provinces, including the march of Vitellius on



2.4 The relief carvings on the Menhir of Kernuz. (Drawings by and with the kind permission of M. Immerzeel)

Italy, the Batavian revolt, and the campaigns of Domitian.[75] Contemporary readers of both authors would have included numerous individuals who knew these barbarian cultures from first-hand experience. Pure ethnographic fiction was simply not an option for either Caesar or Tacitus if their works were to retain any credibility whatsoever. Moreover, many of the topics covered by Tacitus and Caesar are purely neutral observations with neither a political dimension nor a moral or philosophical value. I suspect that these include Caesar's statements about the "*plurima simulacra*" of Mercury, and Tacitus' account of the goddess Nerthus.

The story of Brennus in Diodorus Siculus may belong to the same category of generic statements about barbarian aniconism found in Caesar and Tacitus, but this need not be the case. If the Brennus passage is true, then we must not forget that it represents the opinion of only one ancient Gaul. In Chapter 1, it was noted that diversity of opinion and practices about idols existed among the Romans as well as modern pre-industrial cultures. There were surely similar variations of belief amongst the ancient Celts and Germans as well. Brennus' views were likely different from those of his subjects, and were probably different again from those of the Celts of Gallia Belgica or the Rhine valley encountered by Caesar more than two hundred years later. Iron Age society was neither static nor homogeneous. It is wrong to allow this single anecdote to color our picture of all Celtic religious practice.

Rather than try and explain away Caesar's many images of Mercury, or the crude wooden *simulacra* of Lucan, we should instead try to understand the context of these contradictory claims of barbarian aniconism. In fact, we may do so quite easily if we think back to the textual accounts of early Roman religion discussed above. These three passages are really just examples of the very same sort of moralizing that was used by Varro and Plutarch in their presentations of the earliest Roman religion – just as the earliest Romans practiced a purer form of worship, without the need of cult images, so too do the primitive barbarians of today. We do not know if Tacitus and Diodorus Siculus shared the same Pythagorean ideals as Plutarch and Varro, but as educated Romans they were certainly aware of the philosophical arguments against idol worship. The sneers of Tacitus in his account of the secrecy surrounding the Nerthus cult, and his use of the word "superstition," seem to suggest that he was of a similar opinion. These authors are really inventing in the barbarian the sort of nobility that they would like to see in their own countrymen. Their testimony in favor of Iron Age aniconism is really very weak. So why have they been accorded such weight?

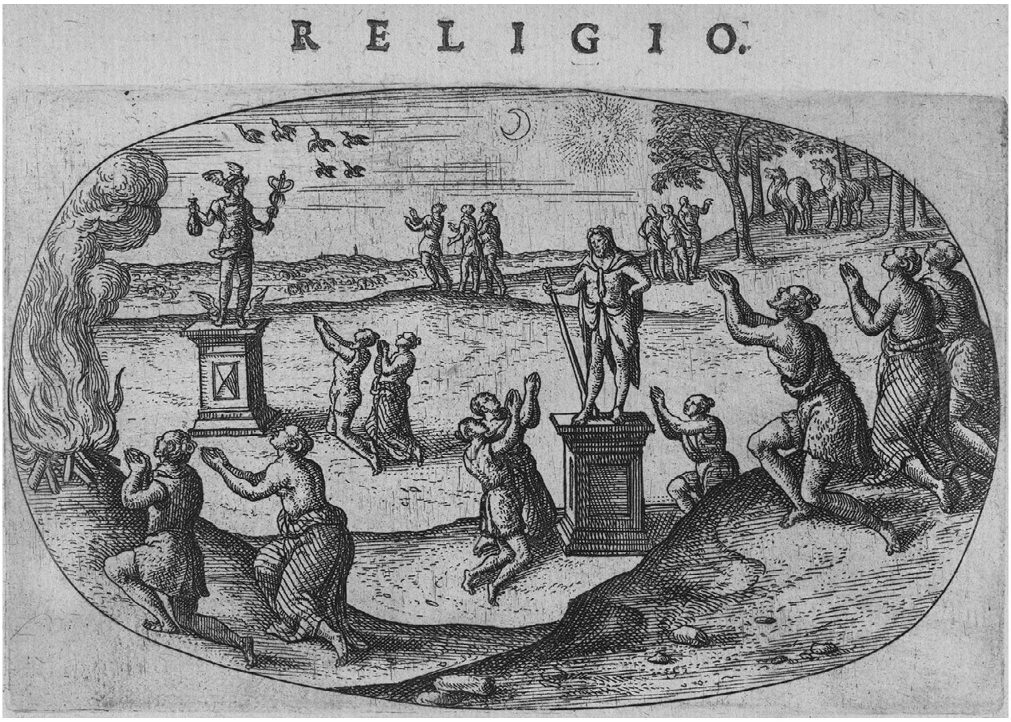
Primitive Religion as Naturalistic and Aniconic

The credibility of the three textual passages discussed above was greatly enhanced by nineteenth and early twentieth century anthropological and sociological theories about the nature of primitive societies. The great thinkers of the day envisioned society and religion passing through universal evolutionary stages of development that generally went from simple to complex ideas. Auguste Comte (1798–1857) and Edmund Tylor (1832–1917) both envisioned religion as advancing from animism/fetishism into polytheism, thence into monotheism, and finally into science. In Tylor's animism, an all-pervasive natural spirit was worshiped in objects, while Comte's fetishism saw primitive societies venerating natural spirits trapped or residing in objects such as rocks, animals, and plants, with the closeness of "primitive man" to nature making it the object of his wonder.[76] The aniconic theory of Iron Age religion is very much a product of this sort of thinking.

The great lengths to which figures like Déchelette and Grenier went to explain away or dismiss the *maesta simulacra* of Lucan, and the *plurima simulacra* of Caesar, shows just how deeply they were influenced by these theories. Iron Age religion could easily be forced into the classification of a primitive and thus naturalistic religious system, the lowest rung of this evolutionary ladder. The Celts and Germans did not use idols, but worshiped nature itself (animism) or, at most, simple natural objects and animals (fetishes). When the more developed Romans arrived, they brought with them a more complicated polytheistic religion and with it the more advanced system of anthropomorphic and figural idols. The situation seemed to parallel the contemporary encounters of advanced European cultures with the primitive societies of Africa, Asia, and the New World.

The idealization of ancient cultures as the predecessors of modern ethnic identities and nations has also played a role in the formation of the aniconic theory. Tacitus' *Germania,* which was rediscovered in 1450, has been a particularly important source for the construction of a modern sense of Germanic heritage.[77] The title of a short tract published by Abraham Ortelius in 1596 on Germanic daily life, "A Picture of the Golden Era," illustrates the admiration afforded to the ancient Germans even in the early modern period, and the extent to which sources like Caesar and Tacitus were taken at face value very early on. The book's chapter on religion opens with an engraving depicting the worship of anthropomorphic idols, notably Mercury, but also natural phenomena – fire, the sun and moon, trees, and flights of birds (**Fig. 2.5**).

By the nineteenth century, European nationalistic movements drew heavily on imagined ancient heritage, connecting Iron Age societies with the inhabitants of modern nation states. While German schoolchildren were being taught how Arminius had unified the Germans against the Romans in AD 9, their French counterparts were being told that they were the direct descendants of the noble Gauls and Vercingetorix.[78] It may have been politically and intellectually difficult for patriotic and public figures like Déchelette, Reinach, and Jullian to find evidence for a practice as repugnant to the modern Western mind as idolatry in "*nos ancêtres les Gaulois.*"



2.5 Illustration from Abraham Ortelius' *Imago aurei saeculi* (1596) at the start of the chapter on the religious practices of the ancient Germans. (GEN *53-1611, Houghton Library, Harvard University, photo by R. Zinck)

Historians no longer intentionally promote the virtues of ancient cultures in this way, and anthropologists no longer think of cultures in evolutionary terms or classify some social systems as primitive in contrast to others. But the aniconic theory of Iron Age religion has nonetheless become so ingrained in our understanding of Iron Age art and archaeology that its dubious intellectual roots are forgotten and its validity is seldom questioned.

PRE-ROMAN IMAGES OF DIVINITIES IN IRON AGE EUROPE

The advocates of imageless Iron Age religion have regularly pointed to the nonexistence, or at least to the great rarity, of pre-Roman monumental sculpture in Iron Age Europe. The archaeological record itself has been used as the greatest and most plausible prop of the aniconic theory. Commenting on Caesar's *plurima simulacra* of Mercury, Thomas Rice Holmes simply and categorically wrote in 1914 that "No pre-Roman Celtic statues have ever been found."[79] Even by the late nineteenth century this was not entirely true, though pre-Roman statues were certainly very rare then and could be dismissed as the unusual exceptions to the rule. The most prominent of these exceptions, the Iron Age sculptures of southern France, were explained away as a fluke by-product of Celtic contact with the Greeks of Massalia and the Romans of Gallia Narbonensis, more advanced cultures who possessed a fully developed Mediterranean sculptural tradition.

The Iron Age sculptures seemed very few in number when compared to the enormous quantities of sculptural images of the gods from the Roman period of Gaul and Germany. These later images included anthropomorphic representations of apparently native divinities, but as an art form seemed to be a Roman introduction that was filling a total vacuum. But if that was so, where did the iconography of these Roman period images of Celtic and Germanic divinities come from? To address this question, we must first consider the validity of the claim that there is no archaeological evidence for images of the gods from the pre-Roman Iron Age.

In the pages that follow, we shall find that the last foundation of the aniconic theory of Iron Age religion crumbles in light of relatively new archaeological evidence that has radically altered our understanding of Iron Age art in Europe. Today, we know of numerous monumental images of divinities from the pre-Roman Iron Age of Western Europe in stone, metal, and wood, and they are far too many of them to be dismissed as rare exceptions. It was on these images that Roman period representations of the gods were based. As these finds have seldom been considered together, and never in English, or in the context of cult image use, it is worth reviewing these discoveries in detail here. Each of the sculptures described in the following discussion are summarized in **Table 3**.

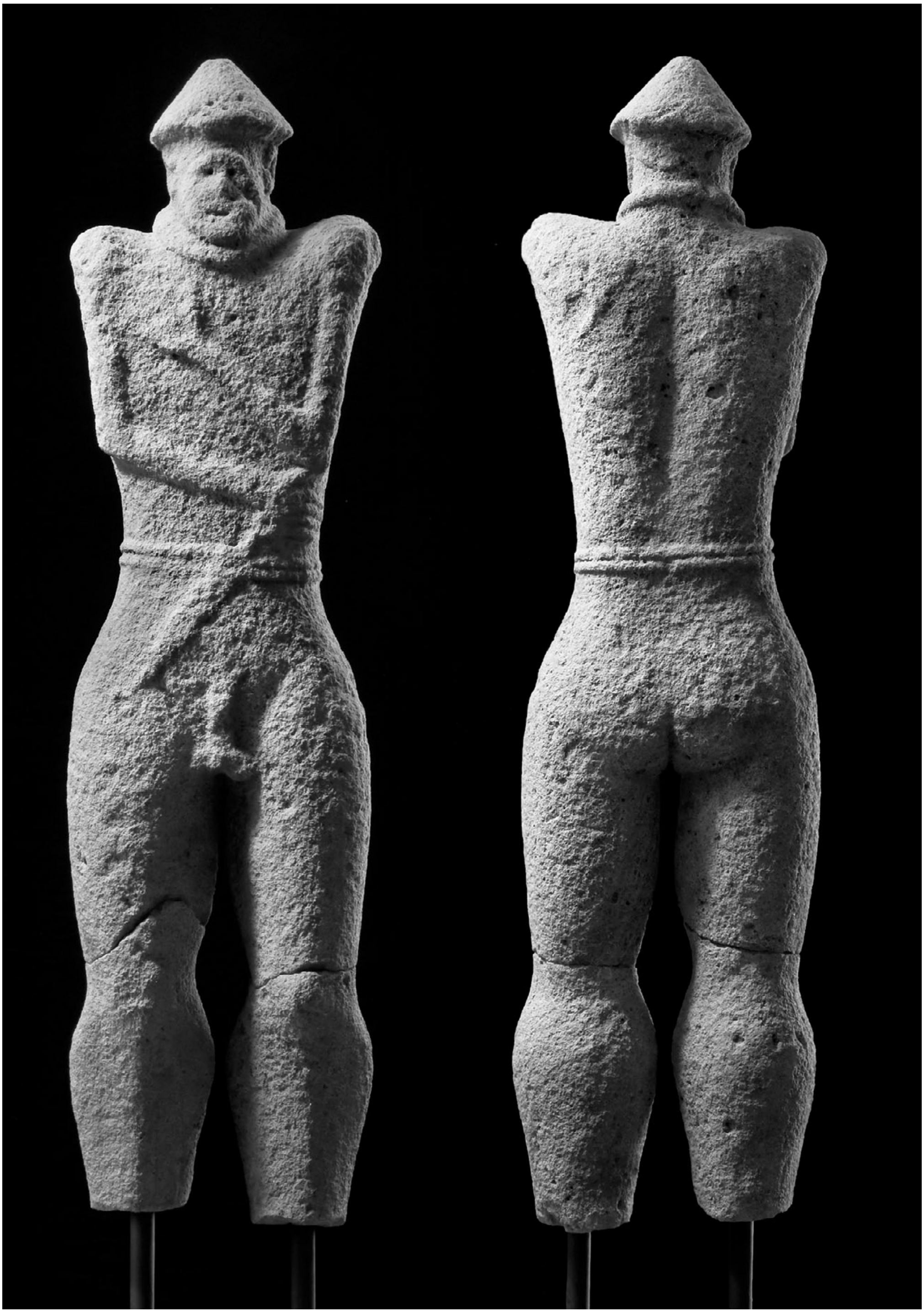
Iron Age Sculpture in Stone

In 1962, a stone figure found at the base of a Hallstatt period tumulus near the village of Hirschlanden (Baden-Württemberg) radically changed the world's view of Celtic art (**Fig. 2.6**).[80] The 150 cm high sandstone statue depicts a male figure with crude facial features, wearing a conical hat, with an erect phallus and his arms folded over his chest. The form of the neck ring, the dagger with a ringed handle in the statue's belt, and material in the tumulus next to which it was found, allowed the "Hirschlanden Warrior" to be dated with confidence to the end of the sixth century BC. Though massively out of proportion to its body, the legs are carved separately, with one placed slightly ahead of the other, like a Greek kouros. For this reason, the very first publications of the Hirschlanden Warrior immediately compared it to Greek and Italic sculptures.[81]

The discovery of the Hirschlanden Warrior added strength to the dating of several monuments without proper find contexts, notably the Pfalzfeld column, a fragmentary sandstone head from Heidelberg, and an impressive 2.30 m high figure from Holzgerlingen. Until now, these sculptures had only been broadly dated to the Iron Age or even early Roman periods. Now they could be placed with certainty in the late Hallstatt and early La Tène, based on their broad stylistic similarity with the Hirschlanden Warrior.[82]

TABLE 3 *Iron Age monuments mentioned in Chapter 2*

Sculpture in stone	Date	Notes / find context
Warrior of Hirschlanden	550–500 BC	Tumulus ditch
Lord of the Glauberg	Ca. 450 BC	Tumulus ditch, near ritual enclosure
Figure from Holzgerlingen	5th century BC	?
Pfalzfelder column	5th century BC	?
Heidelberg Head	5th century BC	?
Vix Les Herbues	ca. 500 BC	Ritual enclosure ditch, with offerings
Roquepertuse, seated warriors	5th–4th century BC	Porticus temple
Glanum warrior	5th–4th century BC	Porticus temple
Entremont (numerous sculptures)	3rd century BC–125 BC	Oppidum
Paule Buste-Socles (Bard of Paule)	3rd–early 1st centuries BC	Aristocratic residence
Ars	3–1st centuries BC	Buste-socle
Bozouls	3–1st centuries BC	Buste-socle
Tour-Magnes, Nîmes	200 BC (Before 16/15 BC).	Buste-socle, set in square base surrounded by coin offerings
God from Euffigneix	1st century BC	Buste-socle?
Molesme	Before Tiberius	Buste-socle, in sanctuary complex
Metal images		
God from Bouray	1st century BC	River
Warrior from Saint-Maur	150–60 BC	Buried in Roman period in Romano-Celtic temple
Gundestrup Cauldron	2nd century BC	
Wooden images		
Braak	Early 4th–mid 3rd century BC	Holzidole
Oberdorla (39 *Holzidole*)	Late Hallstatt–4th century AD	Holzidole, in ritual enclosures surrounding lake
Possendorf	1st century BC	Holzidole
Rude Eskildstrup	5th century AD	Holzidole
Geneva	100 and 80 BC	
Villeneuve	1st century BC	River. Coin offerings
Yverdon-les-Bains, oppidum	68–50 BC	Ditch near gate, with animal offerings
Fellbach-Schmiden	127 BC ± years	
Seurre (Saône River)	Hallstatt?	
Soulac-sur-Mer	6th–3rd centuries BC	

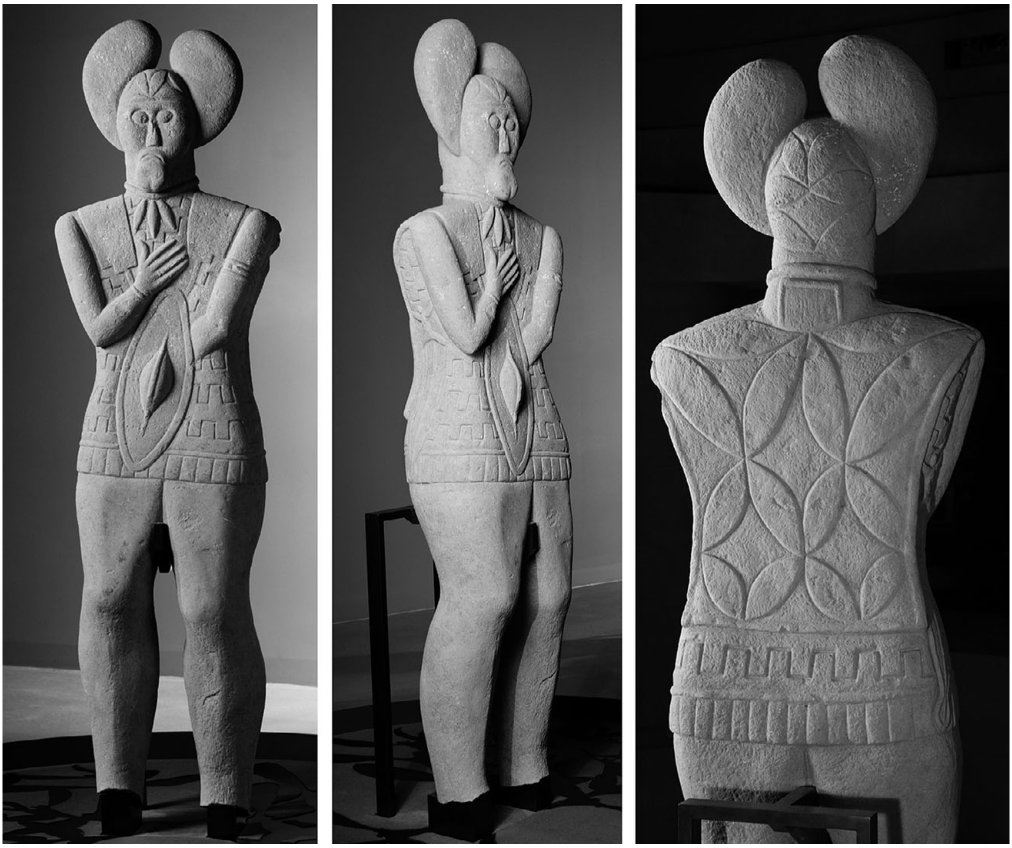


2.6 The Hirschlanden Warrior. Sandstone, H. 150 cm. (Landesmuseum Württemberg, Inv. No. V64,9 photo: P. Frankenstein / H. Zwietasch)

Subsequent finds of Iron Age stone sculpture at Paule (Côtes-d'Armor) in 1988, Vix-Les-Herbues (Côte d'Or) in 1993, and at the Glauberg (Hessen) in 1996, have since altered and refined the picture. Recent surveys of Iron Age sculpture in Western Europe have over identified at least 150 stone sculptures from Gaul and Germany that can be dated with confidence to the pre-Roman period.[83]

The sensation of the Hirschlanden Warrior was eclipsed by an even more incredible discovery in 1996 at the Glauberg, a Celtic hilltop settlement in Hessen. The site was occupied for a stretch of 100 years, from 500 to 400 BC, between the end of the Hallstatt and beginning of the La Tène periods. The exploration of a large tumulus at the foot of the Glauberg produced an almost completely intact and life-sized (H. 1.86 m) red sandstone statue in the ditch surrounding the mound, and fragments from at least three further statues of a similar design (**Fig. 2.7**).[84]

The ditch that surrounded the tumulus did not form a complete circle around it, but extended away from it in two parallel lines to the south-east, forming

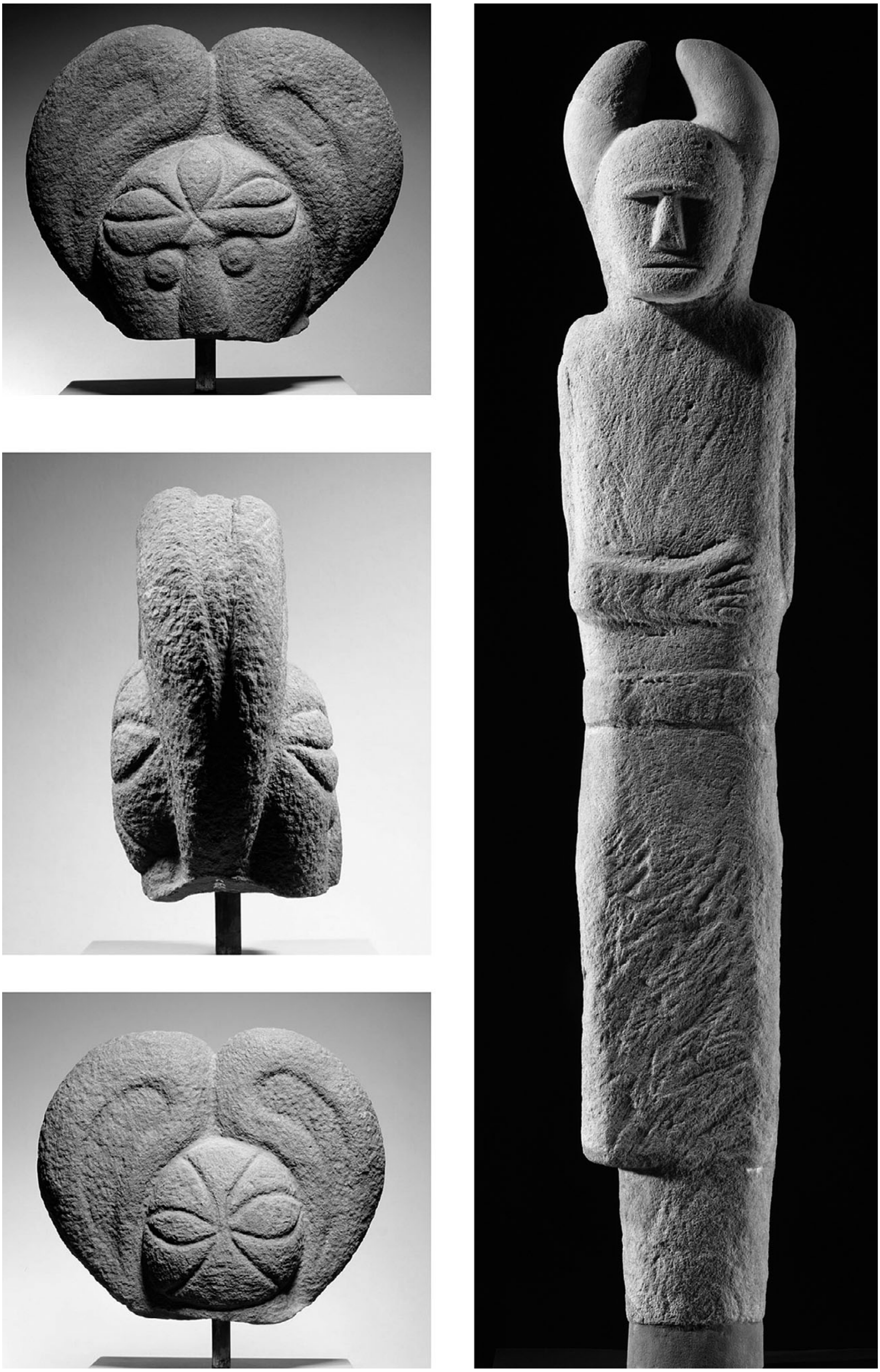


2.7 The Lord of the Glauberg. Red sandstone, H. 1.86 m. (Photo: P. Odvody/Keltenwelt am Glauberg) a 350-m long "processional way" that led up to the Glauberg's outermost earthwork wall. Approximately 40 m to the east of the tumulus was a small square area enclosed by a ditch. In Iron Age archaeology, such enclosures are usually recognized as ritual features, or even as open air temples. The entire area at the foot of the Glauberg, including the processional way, tumuli, and the ritual enclosure have been interpreted as a sacred sector of funerary and ritual significance for those who lived on the hilltop above it.[85]

The intact statue, sometimes referred to as the "Lord of the Glauberg" (or sometimes "Prince" or "Warrior") is arguably the most sophisticated Celtic statue ever found in Western Europe, and certainly the best preserved. Carved completely in the round, the bearded male figure is depicted wearing a tunic of composite armor, consisting of overlapping plates of leather with reinforced shoulders and a cape on the back. He carries an oval shield in his left hand, which is not at all in proportion to his body, and holds his right arm folded over his chest, just like the Hirschlanden Warrior. A sheathed sword with an anthropomorphic grip hangs on his right-hand side. His neck is adorned with a torc from which three oval pendants are suspended. Other jewelry includes depictions of rings on the figure's left upper arm, right wrist, and his right ring-finger. Like the Hirschlanden Warrior, the statue's naked legs appear absurdly out of proportion to the rest of its body, but are broken just above the feet. The large round eyes, crude nose, and bearded face are typical of Hallstatt sculpture, as is the hat with its striking leaf-shaped ornaments.

The dress and equipment of the intact statue correspond almost exactly to the contents of one of two burials in the tumulus next to which it was found. The inhumation contained the skeleton of a 28–32-year-old man, 1.69 m in height, who was buried with many valuable grave goods that allow the burial to be dated to around 450 BC. These include a golden torc with three pendants, a gold arm and finger ring, and a sword with similar grip and sheath, each object virtually identical to its counterpart on the statue. Though no traces of the armor depicted on the statue were recovered, presumably it was a purely organic, the rim of a bronze jug (*Schnabelkanne*) in the burial was adorned with a small cross-legged figure who wears the very same form of armor.[86] As we shall see shortly, the appearance of this sort of leather armor in Germany has broader implications.

During conservation, fragments of bronze wire were identified in the burial that were probably part of a supporting infrastructure for the leaves of a leather cap like that worn by the statue. Very similar conspicuous leaf-shaped headgear is found on the Heidelberg head (**Fig. 2.8, left**), on the heads depicted on the Pfalzfelder column, on the statue from Holzgerlingen (**Fig. 2.8, right**), and elsewhere in Celtic art. The shape of these hats has been associated with mistletoe leaves and they have sometimes been interpreted as a divine attribute, but given the correspondence of grave goods and the statue, the hat here seems



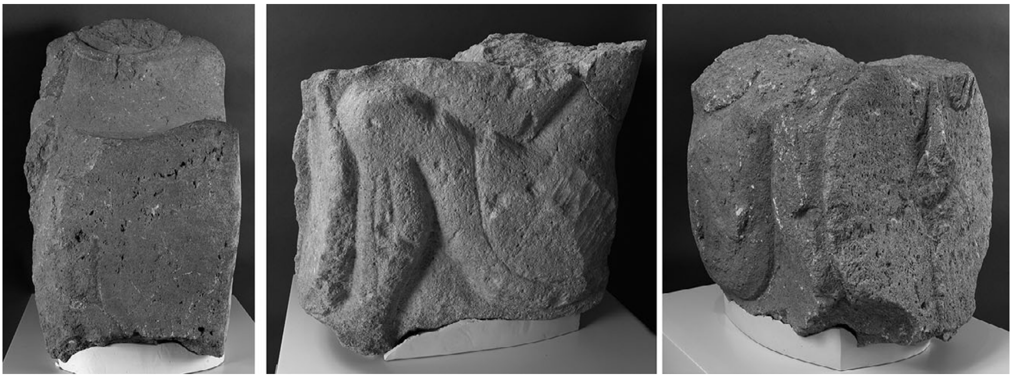
2.8 Hallstatt period statues with mistletoe headgear. Left: The head from Heidelberg, carved in the round. Sandstone, H. 35 cm. (Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe, inv. no. C 6828). Right: The statue from Holzgerlingen. The Holzgerlingen statue is not only the largest known Iron Age statue, but also includes a face on both sides of the warrior represented, suggesting it was meant to be seen from two sides. Sandstone, H. 230 cm. (Landesmuseum Württemberg, Stuttgart, Inv. 1848; Photo: P. Frankenstein / H. Zwietasch) to be earthly piece of attire, or at most an attribute that was shared by gods and elite men.[87]

In the case of the Lord of the Glauberg, the correspondence of grave goods and the attributes of the statue make it very clear that it represented either the very individual buried in the tumulus, or at least the same class of person, who was presumably one of the ruling elites of the settlement.[88] As such, the complete statue and its fragmentary brothers might be considered simple funerary monuments rather than cult images, possibly standing as grave markers above the burials on the side of the tumulus. But finds of contemporary Iron Age sculptures from Vix (Coté d'Or) suggest that the sculptures are far more likely to have been displayed inside the ritual enclosure next to the tumulus.

Excavated between 1991 and 1993, the site at Vix "Les Herbues" consists of a rectangular enclosure (26.4 m × 24.8 m), quite like the one found at the Glauberg, defined by a ditch, and situated in a necropolis. It is located some 200 m from the famous tumulus of the "Princess of Vix," that was excavated in 1953 and in which an enormous bronze volute krater was found. The only feature identified inside the enclosure at "Les Herbues" was a circular offering pit, which, although it contained only stones, is a common feature of ritual enclosures of this sort. Large numbers of fibulae found both within the enclosure and its ditch were presumably left as offerings. Inside the ditch, right next to the enclosure's entrance, the excavators recovered two limestone statues. The fibulae date the enclosure to the last phase of the Hallstatt period, or approximately 510–450BC, making it roughly contemporary with the Lord of the Glauberg.[89]

Both of the statues from Vix had been damaged prior to their deposition. The first depicts a now headless (female?) seated figure wearing a torc and a robe that covers most of her body (**Fig. 2.9, left**). The second statue is a seated male warrior who clasps an oval shield in front of his knees and wears a short sword on his right side (**Fig. 2.9, right**). Cut off at the midriff, the figure once depicted a roughly life-sized man.[90] The statues from Vix wear less distinctive equipment than the Lord of the Glauberg and are in worse condition, but the torc worn by the robed figure is very similar to that found in the burial of the princess at the same site, suggesting that here too specific individuals or elite classes of society were being depicted. The form of the torc, and thus the sculptures, is usually dated to 500 BC, implying that the sculptures were displayed for around fifty years before they were damaged and thrown in the ditch.[91]

It is probable that the Vix statues were displayed inside the rectangular enclosure, so we may reasonably postulate that the Lord of the Glauberg and his brothers were also displayed in their own square enclosure near the foot of the tumulus. At Hirschlanden, the excavators had originally assumed that the



2.9 The limestone statues from the ritual enclosure at Vix Les Herbues. Left: Female wearing a torc. Limestone, H. 62 cm. Right (two views): seated warrior with shield. Limestone, H. 46 cm. (Collection du Musée du Pays Châtillonnais – Trésor de Vix, Châtillon-sur-Seine, Inv. No. 999.5.1 and 999.5.2, Photos © Claire Tabbagh)

statue had stood on top of the mound and had rolled off it, but it has recently been observed that there is a much later secondary burial in the middle of the tumulus, below the spot where the warrior supposedly stood, making this reconstruction very improbable. Though it is possible the warrior stood somewhere on the edge of the tumulus, the situation at Vix and the Glauberg make it more likely that the Hirschlanden Warrior was displayed near the tumulus, perhaps in a sacred enclosure, and only later entered the ditch surrounding the tumulus.[92]

While the statues may well represent the deceased elites of Celtic societies, and are connected to funerary monuments, they were evidently more than just grave markers. Their placement in cult enclosures, where offerings were also deposited, suggests that they were actively used as cult images. It may be that the sculptures represent the divinized ancestors or founders of the settlements with which the tumuli were connected. The large scale of the processional way at the Glauberg, and the offerings of fibulae at Vix, suggest public rituals in which the statues were involved.

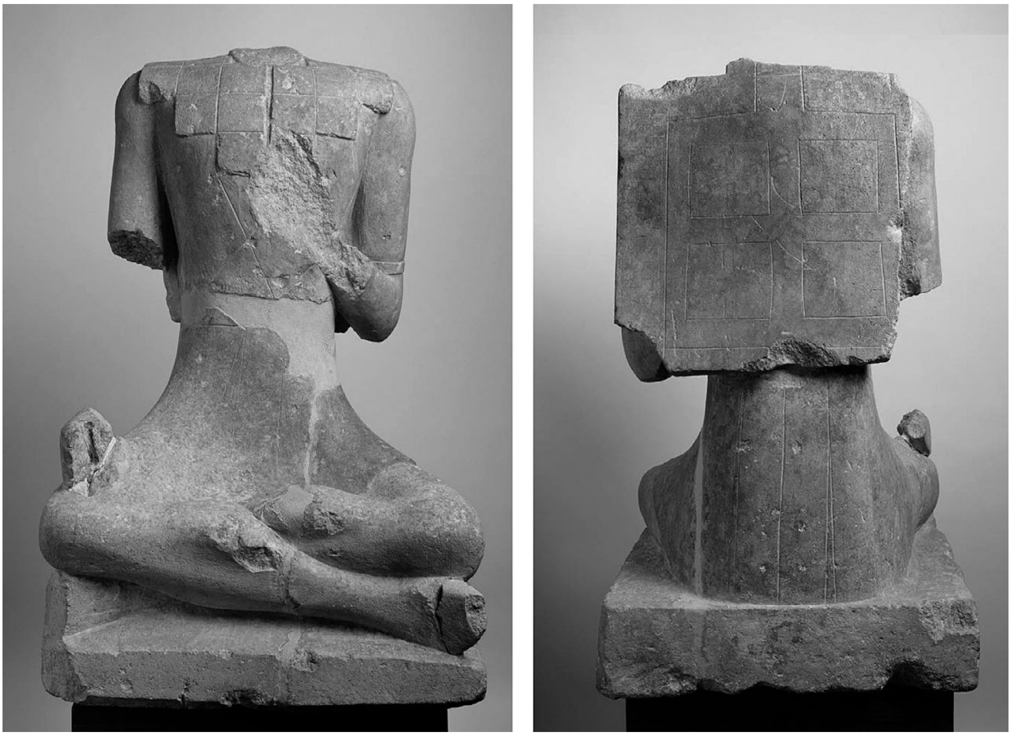
The discovery of the Lord of the Glauberg and the Hirschlanden Warrior has also influenced our understanding of pre-Roman sculpture in the south of France. Iron Age stone sculptures have been recognized in this region since the late nineteenth century, the most important of which were found at Roquepertuse, Glanum, and Entremont, though other Iron Age sculptures have been found at Lattes, Nîmes, and other sites.[93] The group includes representations of cross-legged warrior figures, as well as architectural reliefs depicting animals and severed human heads, and until recently was thought to be an isolated phenomenon.[94] A full survey of southern French Iron Age sculpture is not possible here, but we will consider some examples to highlight the important developments that connect the southern group to other Iron Age sculptures, and show that this was not an isolated regional phenomenon.

Two of the most famous of the southern French sculptures are life-sized statues of seated warriors that were found by accident in the middle of the nineteenth century at Roquepertuse (Velaux, Bouches-du-Rhône), a rocky outcrop. These chance finds inspired later excavations of the site between 1927 and 1929, which identified the outcrop as an isolated sanctuary complex and produced more fragments of sculptures and architectural decoration. A re-investigation of the site between 1991 and 2003 revealed that the supposedly isolated sanctuary at Roquepertuse was, in fact, surrounded by a much larger fortified settlement.

From these most recent excavations, we now know that Roquepertuse was first inhabited in the late fifth century BC, and toward the end of the fourth century BC, a porticus-like structure was built on a plateau of the outcrop, in and near which many of the sculptural fragments were found. This structure was of a simple post-and-lintel design, decorated with skull-shaped cavities, painted with geometric designs, and incised with the outlines of horses. The seated warrior statues from the site were likely displayed inside the porticus, which must have had some ritual significance, though its exact form is controversial. The entire site was violently destroyed around the end of the third century BC, after which it was occupied on a much reduced scale. This second reduced phase of occupation ended when the settlement was again destroyed and abandoned, probably in connection with the Roman conquest of Provence in 123 BC.[95]

The sculpture from the sanctuary at Roquepertuse included a bird of prey, a two-headed herm-like figure, and the pieces of approximately twelve more seated warrior statues like those found in the nineteenth century. Since all of the seated warrior statues follow the same basic pattern, one of the well preserved nineteenth-century finds may serve as an example for the entire group (**Fig. 2.10**).[96] Carved in limestone, the nearly life-sized figure represents a male warrior sitting cross-legged on a rectangular base, with his left arm folded across his chest. Like most of the statues from Roquepertuse, the warrior was intentionally damaged at some point, and is now missing its head and lower right arm, and the left forearm and hand have been chiseled away. Significantly, the statue wears the very same sort of composite armor found on the Lord of the Glauberg, with its shoulders and back protected by the same cape-like extension. The armor and clothing is decorated with incised geometric patterns, and traces of paint are still visible on its back.

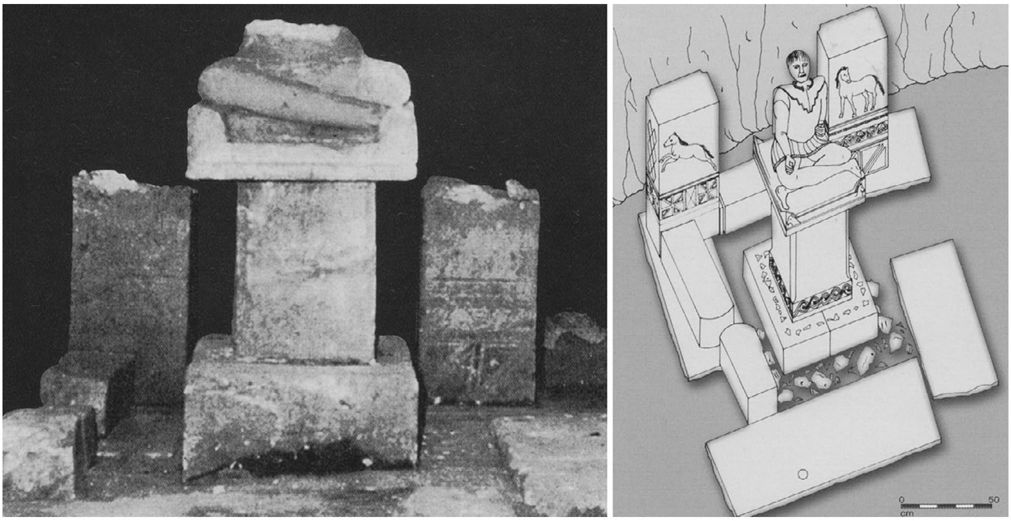
Three more cross-legged warriors with composite armor were found at the Iron Age oppidum at Glanum (Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, Bouches-du-Rhône) during excavations undertaken by Henri Rolland in 1958 and 1965. Activity at this site may have begun as early as the sixth century BC, but serious



2.10 Seated warrior from Roquepertuse, one of the two statues found in the nineteenth century (no. 8270). Limestone, H. 99 cm. (Photo: Collection Musée d'Histoire de Marseille, photograph by David Giancatarina)

occupation did not commence until around 225 BC when fortification walls were constructed. The oppidum suffered a major destruction around 125 BC, and its Iron Age phase ends with an abandonment in 90 BC. After 40 years of inactivity, the site was re-occupied in the Roman period in 49 BC. Two of the three warrior statues from Glanum were found in a later Roman context, while a third was recovered almost *in situ* in the remains of what seems to have been a sanctuary, termed a heroon by the excavator, where all three statues may once have been displayed.[97] In its first phase (225–125 BC) this sanctuary consisted of three statue bases surrounded by post and lintel structures with skull-shaped cavities, much like the porticus sanctuaries at Roquepertuse and Entremont (see below).

In its second phase, lasting from 125 to 90 BC, the sanctuary at Glanum contained a single statue base, flanked by stelae with painted horses and geometric patterns (**Fig. 2.11**). This statue, sitting in the familiar cross-legged position, was found next to the base on which it had originally stood, broken just above the waist. The two other statues were more complete, and wear the same composite armor of the Roquepertuse warriors. This remarkable evidence for original display of the first statue was sealed beneath a later



2.11 Left: The seated warrior from Glanum replaced on the base next to which it was found. Limestone, H. 41 cm (statue). Right: Reconstruction of the statue as it was displayed in phase 2. (Left: Centre des monuments nationaux, Glanum, Collection Hôtel de Sade, Photo: H. Rolland. Right: from Barbet 1991, fig. 15; Drawing by Alix Barbet)

Roman ramp that was built after the heroon had already been a ruin for many decades.[98] The excavator found large quantities of "ritual bowls" around the edges of the statue base, suggesting that these statues were the recipients of offerings and the focus of cult activity.[99]

The third site of interest here is the oppidum of Entremont (near Aix-en-Provence), which is the largest source of pre-Roman Iron Age sculpture in Western Europe. The site was founded and fortified in the late third century BC, and was almost certainly the capital of the Salluvii, which was destroyed by the Romans in 125 BC, and again in its reduced form in 90 BC. More than 300 fragments of sculptures and architectural reliefs have been found here, all of which were smashed to pieces in the destruction of 125 BC and re-used or discarded in various places throughout the site.[100]

The statues from Entremont include pieces of perhaps twenty of the familiar cross-legged warriors, but the iconography of the statues has evolved. Instead of the composite armor, most wear a leather cuirass that covers their upper chest and shoulders, on which a large pectoral brooch or decoration is affixed directly above the sternum. The musculature of the stomach can be seen on several of the statues below this cuirass, but it is unclear if this is meant to represent exposed flesh or an anatomically modelled layer of the armor. One well preserved warrior wears chainmail armor, while others have torcs, armrings, helmets, and swords, which can often be identified with known La Tène period types. New subjects also appear at Entremont, notably statues of seated women, perhaps similar to that found at Vix, as well as horses.[101]

The most striking development of all at Entremont, however, is the abundance of sculpted severed heads on which the warriors sometimes rest their hands, or hold piled-up in their laps. The eyes of the heads are often closed, with their mouths fixed in a grimace. As at Roquepertuse and Glanum, the architecture of Entremont included post and lintels with cavities for severed heads or skulls, but here the heads are sometimes carved in relief next to the empty cavities. A skull transfixed with a large iron nail from Entremont seems to be confirmation that the niches and sculpted heads at all three sites are related to the practice of head-hunting. Presumably the sculpted heads provided a non-degradable form of the real heads of enemies that were displayed as gory offerings in these sanctuary sites.[102]

Traditionally, the sculptures from Roquepertuse and Glanum, and most other sculptures from this region, were dated no earlier than the third and second centuries BC, based on the main occupation dates of the sites at which they were found, and the belief that a Greek artistic tradition would have taken some time to diffuse into the indigenous population. But this dating is no longer tenable, as the composite armor so firmly dated at the Glauberg to 450 BC is found on the statues at both Roquepertuse and Glanum.

Other clues also point to an earlier dating for many of the southern French sculptures. On one of the seated warriors from Glanum, the figure's penis is clearly visible, calling to mind the same attribute on the Hirschlanden Warrior. This shared trait led Patrice Arcelin and André Rapin to identify this figure as the earliest of the three statues from Glanum, and to suggest a date of no later than 500 BC or earlier, with the other two pieces from the site being carved somewhat later.[103] Finds of sculpted images in stratified contexts at other sites in southern France, notably Lattes, Marduel and Nîmes (Grézan), have since reinforced this earlier dating of the Roquepertuse and Glanum sculptures.[104] At Entremont, on the other hand, the equipment worn by the statues, including the chainmail armor, makes it clear that the statues were contemporary to the second century oppidum.

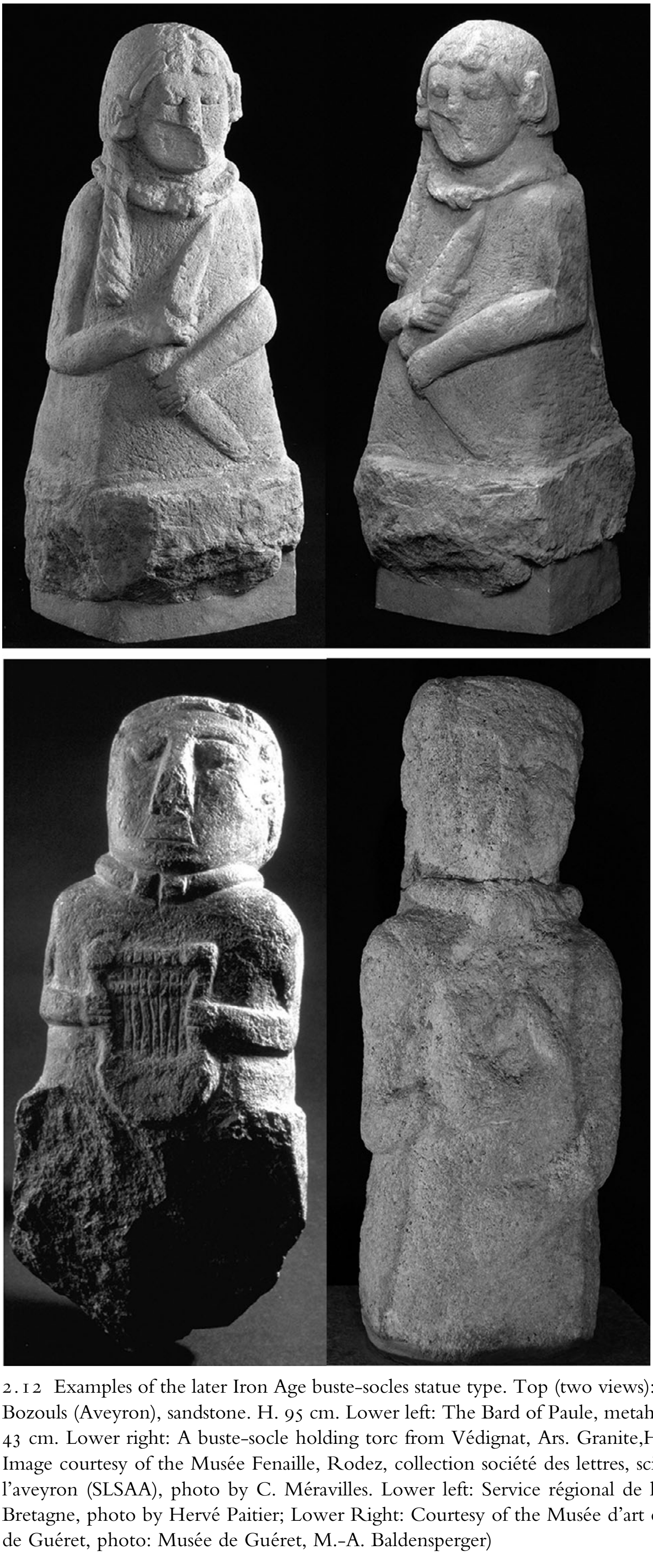
Not only were the seated warrior statues produced for a long period of time, they were also displayed and used for many centuries. The seated warriors of Roquepertuse presumably date to the site's earliest phase of occupation in the late fifth century BC, but we cannot be certain whether they were destroyed in the late third century BC, or in 123 BC. The evidence of Glanum suggests that such cross-legged warrior statues had very long lives. Remarkably, the statues at Glanum were already between 275 and 250 years old when they were first put on pedestals in the first phase of the heroon.[105] The fragmentary statue from the heroon's second phase was around 360 years old when the sanctuary fell into final ruin, and had been on display in this particular setting for the last 35 or so years. As the offerings around it suggest, it was still the subject of ritual at this time. By any standard, these statues had remarkably long functional lives.

This brings us to the question of their function. If the seated warrior figures at Roquepertuse and Glanum were old by the time they were first displayed, one possibility is that they had originally stood next to funerary monuments, much like the statues from the Glauberg and Vix, either at the site of the future settlements or in the surrounding countryside. When the settlements formed or expanded in the third and second centuries BC, the now venerable statues were considered significant enough to be brought in and housed in prominent monumental settings, such as the porticus sanctuaries, and became the active recipients of cult attentions. If they were originally representations of living individuals, these images had become local divinities, divinized heroes, or ancestors, serving a unifying function to the entire community. This puts them very much in the realm of cult images, if not of actual idols.

The revised and earlier chronology of the southern French sculptural group also changes the view that Iron Age sculpture in this region is a fluke by-product of indigenous contact with Greek colonists.[106] In fact, the sculptures were carved almost at the same time as the arrival of the Greeks, and even in the case of the later sculptures from Entremont, neither the iconography or style have much in common with Hellenistic Greek art. Recent work on Celtic sites in the region has shown that while indigenous groups may have adapted aspects of Greek culture that interested them, e.g. a taste for Greek wine, there was no programmatic adoption of Greek customs.[107] On the whole, the southern French finds have more in common with the German finds than they do Greek art.

Iron Age sculpture in stone is not limited to southern Germany and France, and a series of half-length male figures, usually 1 m or less in height, that terminate in square bases, are more widely distributed than the larger German and southern French sculptures. Termed the *buste-socles* in recent French literature, statues of this type are best known from Armorica (modern Brittany), though they have been recorded in central and southern France as well. Most date from and the later La Tène period. The so-called Bard of Paule (**Fig. 2.12, lower left**) is probably the best known statue in the group.

Rescue excavations at the site of Paule (Côtes-d'Armor) in 1988 uncovered a small statue (**Fig. 2.12, lower left**) depicting the upper torso of a male wearing a torc with buffered (flat) ends. The statue's head is turned slightly upward, and its schematic face is dominated by a large rectangular nose, straight brow, and bulging oval eyes. The tiny arms and crude hands are represented in relief clutching a Celtic lyre in front of the figure's chest, an attribute that evoked the modern name of the statue. Three further busts were found in later excavations at Paule between 1996 and 1997, all carved in the same type of stone and in a similar style to the Bard, but lacking the lyre and torc. The lower half of each of the busts, the "socle" or plinth, was left unworked and may well have been buried when the figures were originally displayed.



2.12 Examples of the later Iron Age buste-socles statue type. Top (two views): The God from Bozouls (Aveyron), sandstone. H. 95 cm. Lower left: The Bard of Paule, metahornblendite, H. 43 cm. Lower right: A buste-socle holding torc from Védignat, Ars. Granite,H. 48 cm. (Top: Image courtesy of the Musée Fenaille, Rodez, collection société des lettres, sciences et arts de l'aveyron (SLSAA), photo by C. Méravilles. Lower left: Service régional de l'archéologie de Bretagne, photo by Hervé Paitier; Lower Right: Courtesy of the Musée d'art et d'archéologie de Guéret, photo: Musée de Guéret, M.-A. Baldensperger)

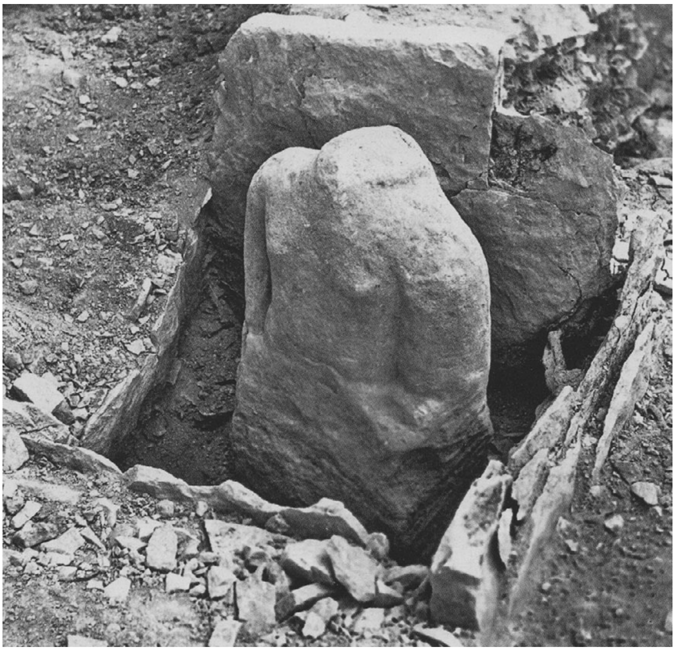
The site of Paule gives a broad date for the statues. Founded in the third century BC, it was a fortified farmstead or aristocratic residence protected by ramparts and ditches, and was finally abandoned in the last decades of the first century BC. The Bard of Paule and one of the other statues were found in a ditch that surrounded the site, while two others were found in a crude cellar or cave that had been dug into the bedrock below the settlement. Associated finds suggest dates of deposition in the late second or early first centuries BC.[108] In the initial publication of the sculptures from Paule, Yves Ménez proposed that they were essentially ancestral portraits of local Celtic aristocrats, comparable in function to the *imagines* of Roman Republican houses.[109]

Both the form of the statues and dating of the context of the *buste-socles* from Paule are typical for the type, though their geographical distribution is relatively broad. The largest known example (H. 95 cm) was found in southern France at Bozouls (Aveyron) in 1957 (**Fig. 2.12, top**). It wears a torc with buffered terminals, and holds a sword in its right hand and a sheath in its left. The figure's hair hangs in a plait down the left side of the face.[110] An example in granite from Védignat (Ars, Creuse) wears a torc and has its arms folded over its chest clasping a circular object, possibly a torc, in its right hand (**Fig. 2.12, lower right**).[111]

Another southern French *buste-socle* was found in the excavation of the Tour Magnes in Nîmes in 1961, and may well be contemporary with the site's prehistoric ramparts of about 200 BC. It provides our best evidence for how these statues were originally displayed (**Fig. 2.13**). The base of the now headless statue was wedged in a crack in the rocks, and was framed by a box-like base of square plates of stone. On either side, some 2 m distant, stood two plain stone stele. This box-like feature in which the statue was housed was still exposed when it was buried by construction debris from a Roman tower that was built on top of the prehistoric ramparts in 16/15 BC. The statue had been the recipient of offerings, as the square box in which it was mounted was filled with numerous coins from the early first century BC.[112] Thus the now headless monument seems to have had a long functional life.

The most recently discovered *buste-socle* comes from Molesme (Côte-d'Or), and though it is in atrocious condition, it has a good archaeological context. Decapitated and badly worn, the statue holds its left hand flat against its chest, and a sword in its right. It was found in 2004 in a late La Tène and early Roman sanctuary complex, buried in a pit that had been filled prior to the reign of Tiberius. Though not found *in situ*, the broader context of the sanctuary suggests that this statute and other sculptures like it had a ritual significance that was not necessarily funerary.[113]

Though its lower side is broken, and we do not know if it once had the same square base that characterizes the *buste-socles*, the celebrated "God from

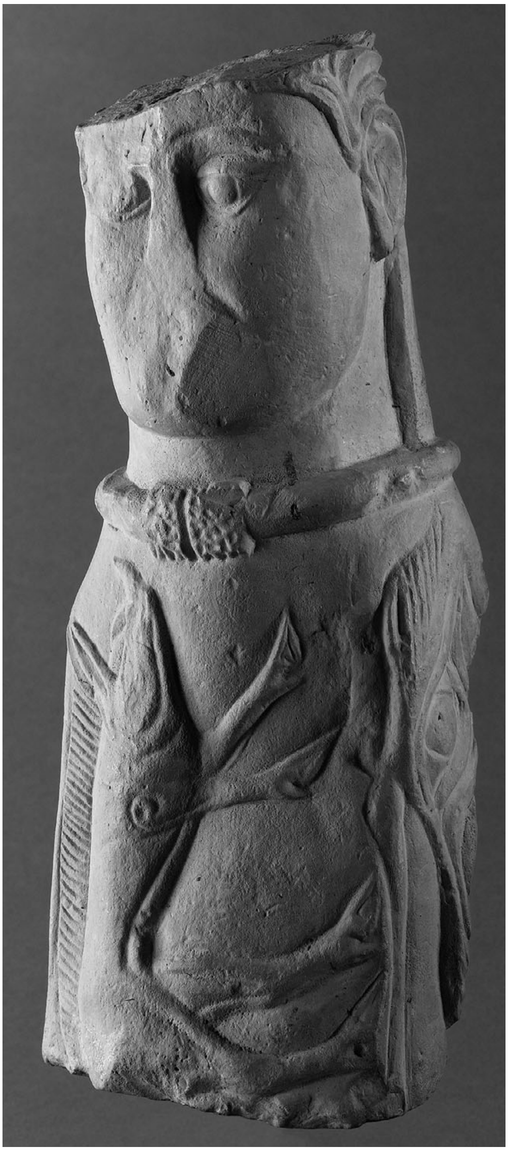


2.13 Buste-socle from Nîmes, Tour Magne as excavated in 1961. Limestone, H. 73 cm. (Musée archéologique de Nîmes; Photo: P. Varène)

Euffigneix" (*Dieu d'Euffigneix*, Euffigneix, Haute-Marne) is comparable to or greater than the Barde of Paule in its iconographic complexity and is perhaps one of the most famous and elaborate Iron Age sculptures known (**Fig. 2.14**). It was found in 1922 alongside some bones when a farmer was digging out a horse that was stuck in the mud, and is conventionally dated to the first century BC. Both this dating of the statue, and its conventional title that identifies the subject as a god, are conjectures.[114] The figure's cylindrical appearance has been compared to a wood carving, as if the stone relief is confined to the natural shape of a wooden trunk or log.[115]

The top part of the God from Euffigneix's head has been neatly sheared off, and its heavy set features are damaged at the nose and mouth. With the lids and irises clearly demarcated, the eyes are better articulated than the blob-like ovals or circles found elsewhere in Iron Age sculpture. The head is tilted very slightly to the figure's right, and the thick neck wears a large torc with buffered terminals. Two large strands of hair run past the shoulders behind the ears and are tucked below the torc. Thus far the piece is similar to other Iron Age sculptures, but its chest is dominated by a remarkable relief depiction of a boar, while the sides, which seem to lack arms, are carved with close-up view of an animal's eye. It is primarily this use abstract animal imagery that has led to the traditional identification of the piece as a representation of a divinity. Later on, we shall see that the combination of human and animal attributes, notably the use of horns, becomes an aspect of later Romano-Celtic representations of divinities.

The *buste-socles* from Paule have been interpreted as the depictions of ancestors or aristocrats that were displayed in the elite residence, but the animal imagery of the Euffigneix bust are suggestive of divine attributes. The decapitated *buste-socle* from Nîmes, with its square base and coin offerings, and the sanctuary context of the bust from Molesme, support an interpretation for the *buste-socles* that goes beyond the role of grave markers or ancestral portraits. Like the earlier stone sculptures of the Celtic world that stood near tumuli, a good case can be made that the *buste-socles* were used in an active ancestral cult, and were venerated over a very long period of time.



2.14 The God from Euffigneix. Limestone, H. 28 cm. (Musée d'Archéologie Nationale, Saint-Germain-en-Laye. © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY. Photo: Thierry le Mage)

Metal Images of the Gods in the Iron Age

Anthropomorphic and figural images from the Iron Age in metal are extremely rare, though there may once have been a large body of such sculptures that have since been melted down. Small anthropomorphic and zoomorphic elements in other objects, such as fibulae, weapons, or vessels, are a fairly common feature of Iron Age metalwork. These include the small (H. 4.2 cm) seated warrior wearing composite armor that was once attached to a bronze jug (*Schnabelkanne*) in one of the Glauberg burials, that is a miniature version of one of the southern French seated warrior statues.[116] But such decorative attachments are not really directly comparable to Roman period cult images or idols, and we will concentrate here on the evidence for monumental art.

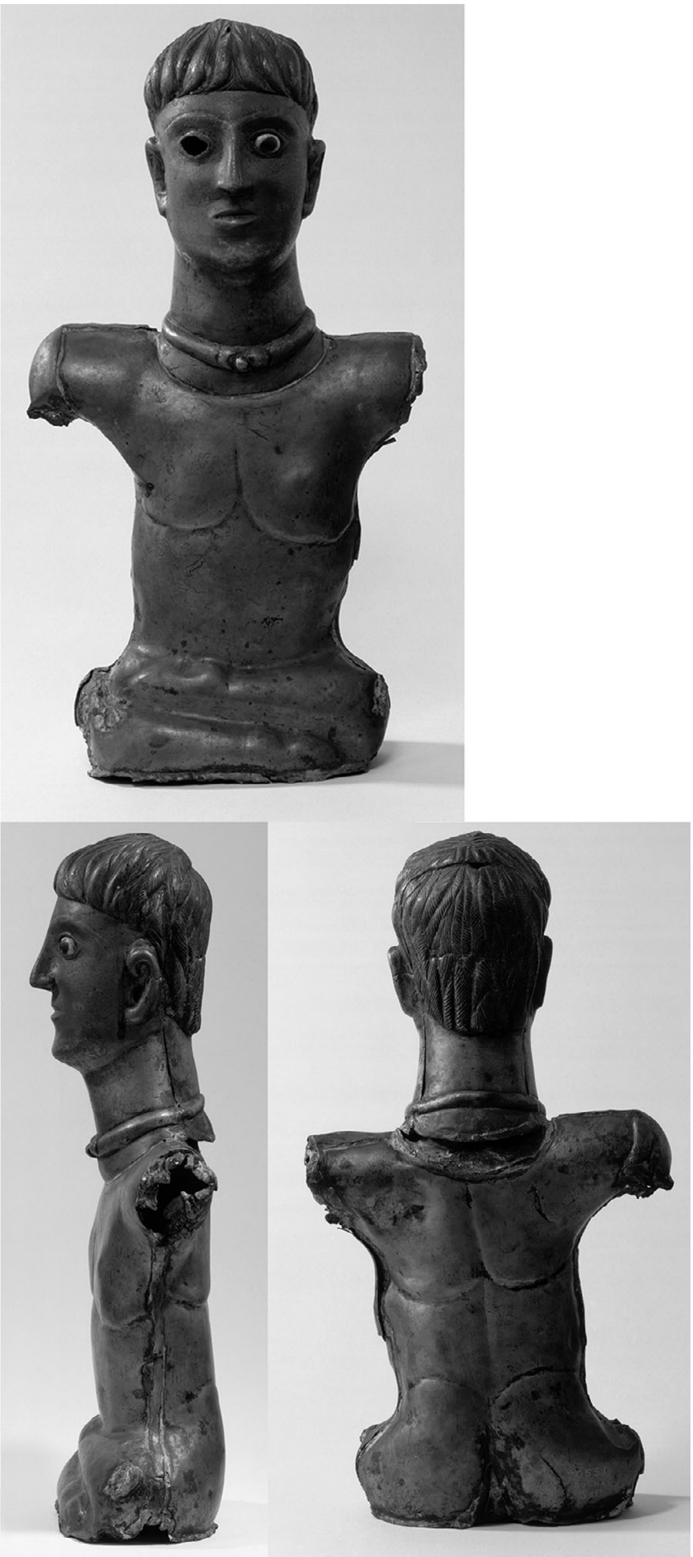
Two bronze statues from Bouray-sur-Juine (Essonne) and Saint-Maur-en-Chaussée (Oise) are perhaps the best candidates for Iron Age monumental metal sculptures that represent gods, but their dating is somewhat uncertain.

Both are frequently cited in general works on Celtic art and religion, and are conventionally placed in first century BC or early first century AD, and though such a date range is convincing, it is based purely on stylistic and technical considerations.

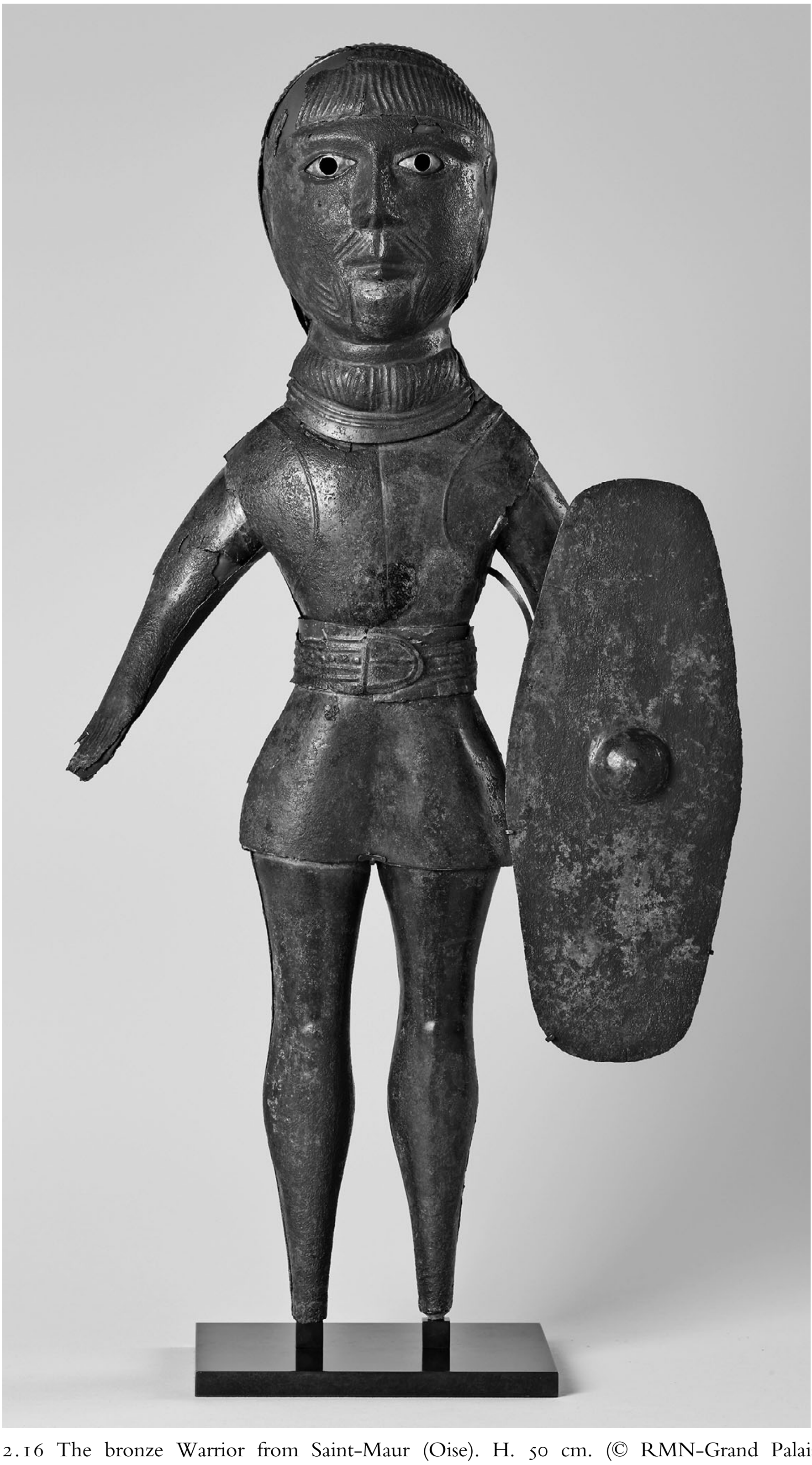
The 42 cm high "God from Bouray" (*Dieu de Bouray*) (**Fig. 2.15**) was found in the Juine River in 1845 during dredging operations near the gardens of the Château de Mesnil-Voysin. The hollow figure was made by soldering together plaques of bronze. The two forming the head were cast, while the pieces of the body were beaten into shape. The eyes were also made separately, the right one is now missing, but the left eye is composed of white glass paste with the iris colored blue. Broken pieces of metal and traces of solder on the lower parts of the statue show that it was once attached to a metal base. The main justifications for the statue's pre-Roman date are its seated position, comparable to the seated stone warriors of Provence, its torc, and the general lack of anatomically correct proportions that are normal for Roman art. Moreover, Roman bronzes of this size would typically be cast in only one or two pieces, and not soldered together from several plaques.[117]

The proportions of the God from Bouray are one of its most striking features. The arms and legs are dwarfed by the enormous head, neck, and torso. The arms are broken just below the shoulders, but traces of solder on the figure's thighs and knees suggest that hands once rested on its lap. The face is beardless, with large, arched eyebrows leading into a straight nose. A short coiffure hanging in locks forms a straight line along the forehead in a manner that is reminiscent of Julio-Claudian portraiture. The muscles of the torso are worked in low relief, and it has been proposed that the figure is wearing an anatomical cuirass, though the delineation of the buttocks and shoulder blades on the rear of the piece seems to suggest that actual anatomy is intended. The statue's neck is adorned with a torc that is fastened at the front with a hook-and-eye mechanism. The feet are often described as hooves, which has led to an association with the horned divinity Cernunnos (see Chapter 3), though it is possible that the feet are merely ill-defined shoes.[118]

The Warrior from Saint-Maur-en-Chaussée (Oise) was stolen from a Romano-Celtic sanctuary site by treasure hunters in 1983 (**Fig. 2.16**), but a description of the find circumstances was obtained when it was later recovered. Apparently, the bronze statue was found buried 60–80 cm below the modern surface, broken into its component pieces in a box-like structure composed of roof-tiles. Excavation of the site in this area revealed pits, trenches, and posthole alignments belonging to the mid to late Iron Age. Finds from the pits included weapons, coins, and fibulae, mostly dating from La Tène D1 (150–60 BC), and it is usually assumed that the figure was made in this phase of occupation, but was buried in the Roman period. In the Augustan period, a Romano-Celtic style temple was built nearby, and



2.15 The God from Bouray. Bronze, H. 42 cm. (Musée d'Archéologie Nationale, Saint-Germain-en-Laye. © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY. Photo: Jean-Gilles Berizzi)



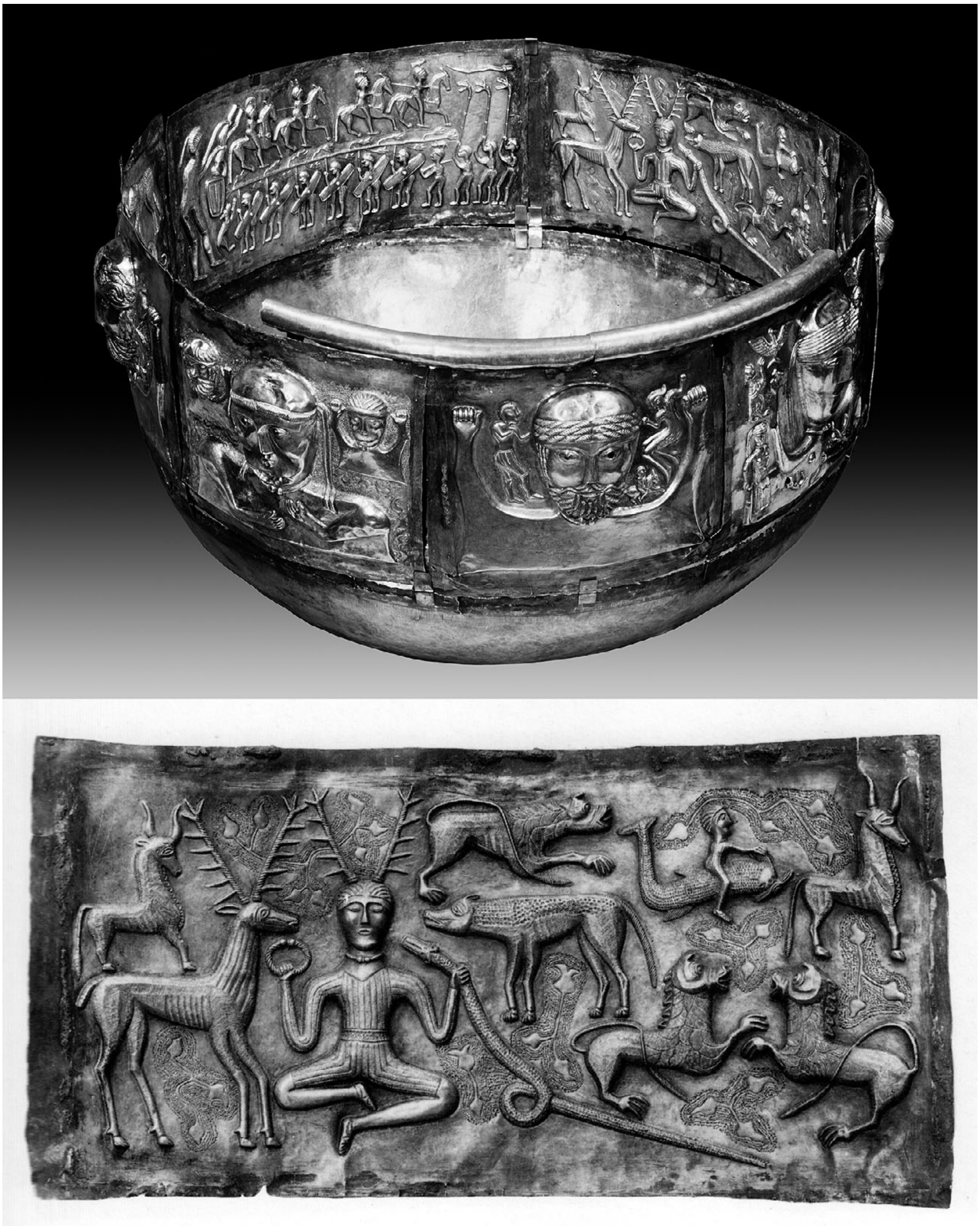
2.16 The bronze Warrior from Saint-Maur (Oise). H. 50 cm. (© RMN-Grand Palais (MUDO - Musée de l'Oise), Photo: Franck Raux) a bronze hand and the fragment of a belt from a statue that was stylistically and technically similar statue to the Warrior were found near it.

The technique used to create the Warrior from Saint-Maur is the same as that of God from Bouray, with 22 separate plates of beaten bronze being soldered together to complete the statue. The feet, and presumably the base to which they were attached, are missing. The Warrior wears a tunic and cuirass with a broad belt and holds a rectangular shield with a round boss in his left hand. The disproportionally large head is bearded, with the hair cut in a straight fringe above the forehead, and the lips set in a straight line. A torc with buffered ends surrounds its neck. The plaques for the whites of the eyes are silver, while the space for the iris and pupils are both now empty. Traces of a brown and reddish substance in the areas of the eyes were reported by the finder, and seem to suggest a colored paste representing the irises.[119]

Though not a statue, the Gundestrup Cauldron (**Fig. 2.17**) is the most famous and often cited source of images of divinities from the European Iron Age, but it is also one of the period's most controversial and poorly understood artworks. Since some of its imagery is of relevance in the next chapter, we will consider it briefly here. The enormous silver vessel weighs 8.9 kg and was found in pieces by peat cutters in 1891 near Gundestrup in northern Jutland (Denmark). Presumably it reached Jutland in antiquity, having been taken from Gaul or another part of Europe either as plunder or in trade. Both the form and iconography of the cauldron have allowed it to be dated with some confidence to the second century BC, but its place of origin and the nature of the scenes depicted are still very much disputed.

Both the interior and exterior of the cauldron are composed of silver plates into which raised figural reliefs have been beaten and punched. The five plates on the inside of the cauldron show a cross-legged figure with long horns holding a torc and a snake and surrounded by animals (**Fig. 2.17, detail**), a bearded male half-bust being presented with a wheel by a full length warrior, men hunting bulls with dogs and swords, a female half-bust surrounded by real and mythical animals, and finally procession of warriors and horsemen accompanied by carnyx players, the long Celtic trumpet. Each of the seven outer panels depict male or female half-busts wearing torcs, and flanked by smaller figures and busts, sometimes holding people or animals in their hands. In one instance, a small figure appears to be braiding the hair of the larger half-bust.

While much of the cauldron's imagery seems to be Celtic, the concept of a large silver vessel like the cauldron, and the fabrication techniques used to create it, suggest that it is the product of Thracian craftsmen who were inspired by metalwork of the Hellenistic world. One possibility is that the cauldron was made by Thracians working for Gauls, but another recent and popular proposal is to see the cauldron simply as the product of an Iron Age European



2.17 The Gundestrup Cauldron. Silver, Dm. 46 cm. Lower; detail of the panel depicting the horned god. (National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen http://samlinger.natmus.dk/DO/asset/13955 photo: Lennart Larsen)

culture that reflects both global and local trends, rather than assigning it to any single cultural group.[120]

The Gundestrup Cauldron itself was not a cult image or idol in the strictest sense, but it does show divinities with a distinctive Celtic iconography, or at least European Iron Age iconography. The half-busts with torcs that appear on the exterior panels are not dissimilar to the stone half-busts from Paule and elsewhere, while the seated figure with horns, and the half-bust receiving a wheel, correspond to representations of Cernunnos and Jupiter with a wheel attribute as they are known in later Romano-Celtic art (see Chapter 3). These are representations of full-fledged gods rather than divinized ancestors or heroes. The fact that human figures seem to interact directly with gods in these scenes is significant. Are the divinities on the Gundestrup cauldron actually representations of Iron Age idols, or are these scenes of epiphanies? Sadly, the disputed ethnic and geographic origins of the cauldron make it a highly problematic source. In a global sense, however, it can at least be seen as evidence that divinities could be pictured in anthropomorphic and figural form in the late Iron Age world.

Wooden Sculptures in the Iron Age

Since wood perishes quickly in the ground, and in most circumstances leaves only the faintest of imprints in the archaeological record, the place of wooden sculpture in Iron Age art has been greatly underestimated. Finds of prehistoric wooden sculptures in the Celtic and Germanic world are limited to the bogs and swamps of northern Europe, and to rare water-logged locations in more southerly findspots. This means that their distribution pattern is largely the result of the chances of survival rather than an indication of the extent to which wooden sculpture actually existed in antiquity. A few archaeologists and art historians have suggested that a pre-Roman tradition of wooden sculpture influenced Roman provincial stone sculptural art, but none have surveyed the available evidence or its implications in depth.[121]

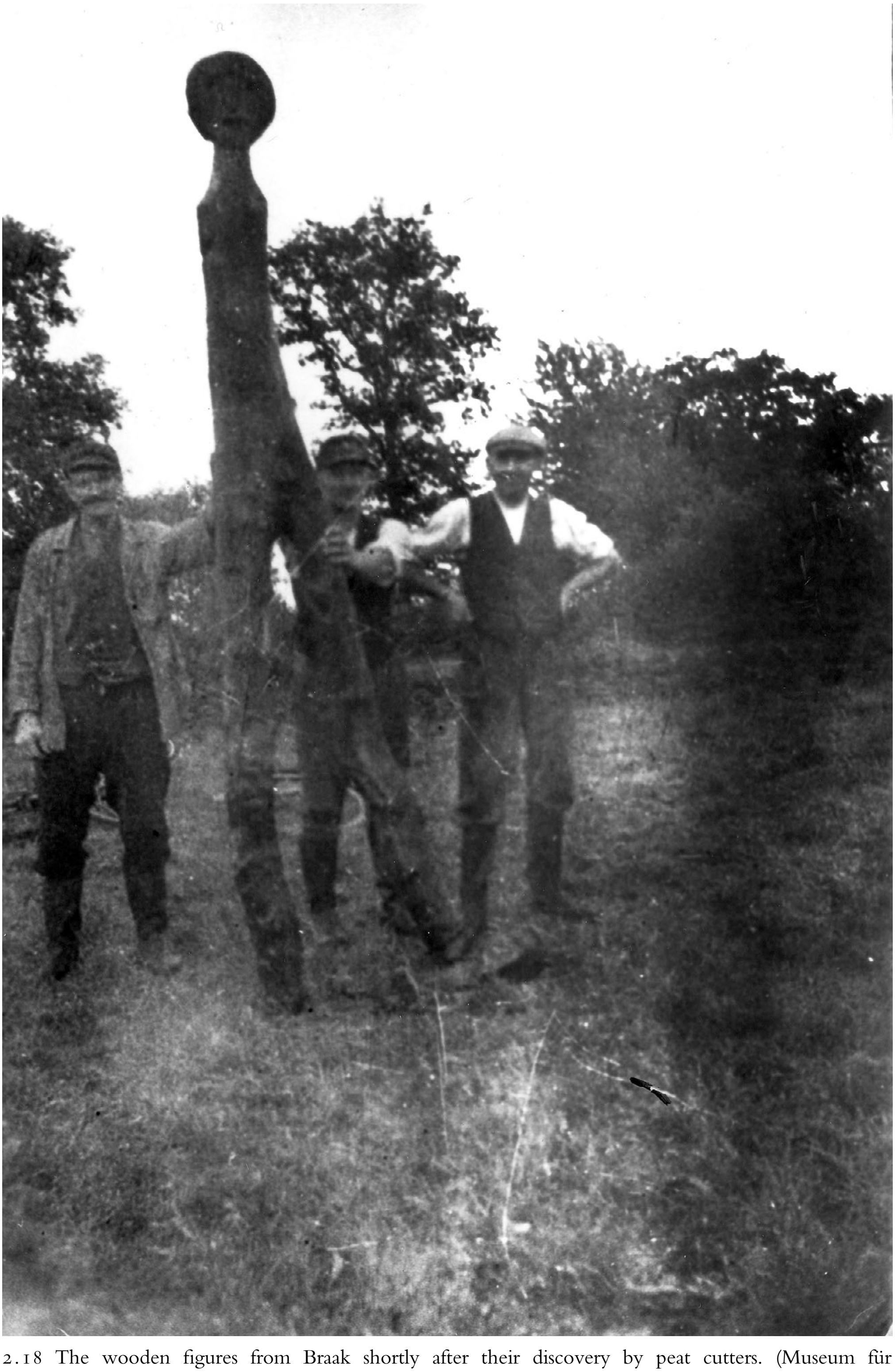
In northern Germany, Jutland, Scandinavia, Britain, and Ireland there exists a group of anthropomorphic wooden figures which in German literature are referred to as "*Holzidole*" ("Wooden Idols") or "*Holzmenschen*" ("Wooden People").[122] The terms encompass a broad group of wooden sculptures that share certain characteristics. All are crude representations of anthropoid figures carved from tree trunks and branches. The figures are usually naked and have schematic faces and genitalia. Ranging in date from the Neolithic to Late Antique and Early Medieval periods, most of the *Holzidole* were found in the nineteenth and early twentieth century by peat cutters, and only a very small number have been found in proper excavations. Like bog bodies, another artificial find category with which the wooden figures have much in common, the immense time span within which these sculptures can be dated suggests that they served a range of functions.

For the purposes of this discussion, we may limit our attention to wooden figures datable to the Iron Age and imperial period. Though most were found in areas that were never incorporated into the Roman Empire, the *Holzidole* represent an Iron Age tradition of wooden religious sculpture that was almost certainly present in pre-Roman Gaul and Germany as well, as rare finds of similar wooden sculptures from Switzerland and southern Germany attest. In fact, it seems most likely that the *maesta simulacra* (crude images) of Lucan and the *plurima simulacra* (many images) of Caesar were made of wood, and looked something like the *Holzidole*.

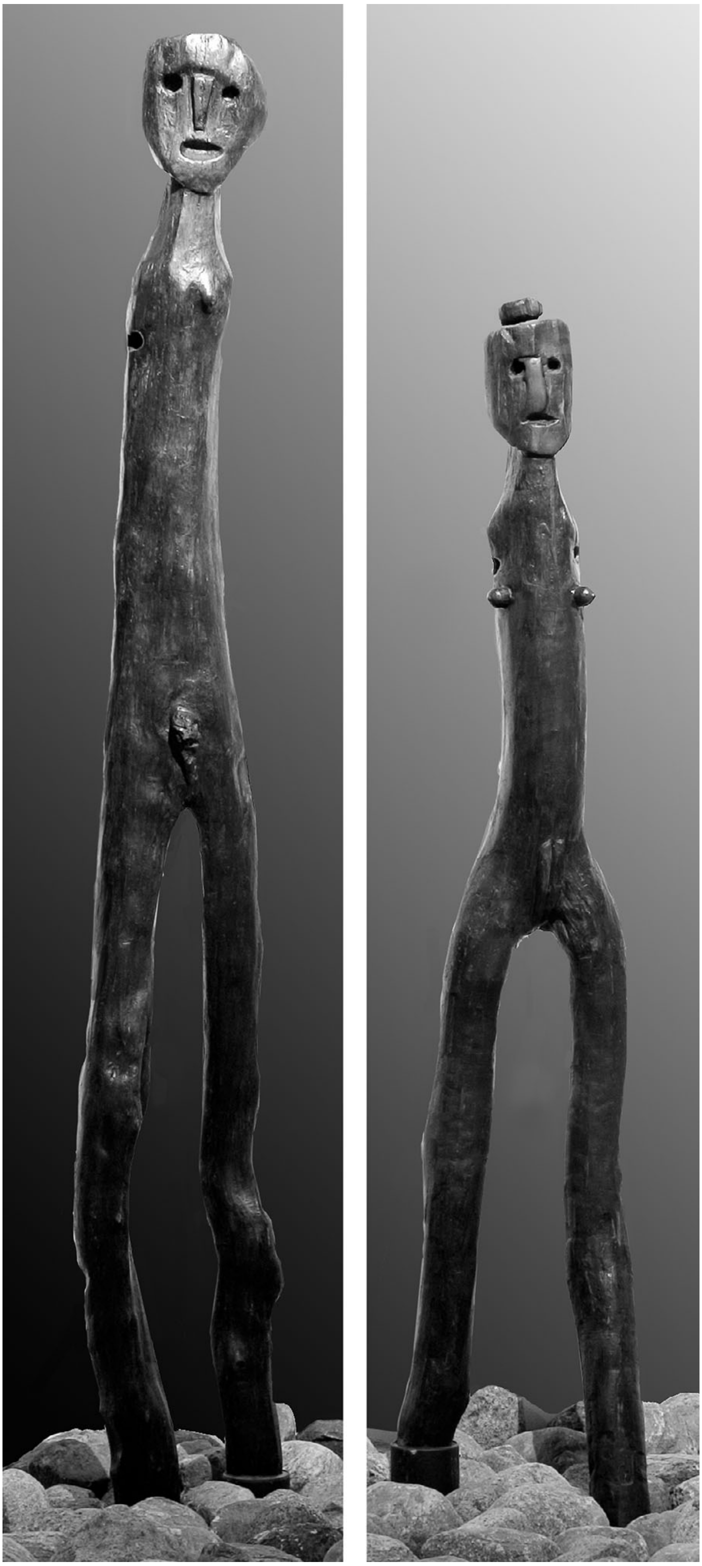
The very large male and female oak figures found by peat cutters in the Aukamper Moor at Braak (Ostholstein) in 1946 are probably the most famous of the *Holzidole* (**Fig. 2.18**).[123] A subsequent excavation of their findspot showed that the pair had been intentionally buried in close proximity to a ritual site of the Late Bronze Age.[124] Both figures were carved from tree branches, with the natural division in the branches forming their legs (**Fig. 2.19**). In the case of the male figure, a third outgrowth of the wood formed a phallus. Their necks are represented by narrowing the branches, with crude eyes, noses, and mouths carved into the rounded heads above them. The female has a cylindrical projection carved on top of her head, which presumably represents her hair, and crude genitalia between her legs. The arms of both figures, and the breasts of the female, were separate attachments that fitted into holes drilled in their bodies. Modern breasts were added to the female figure shortly after the pair's discovery, and belong to a series of early interventions that included injecting and coating the figures with paraffin and other preservative agents. These chemicals complicated the first radio-carbon dating of the figures, which were re-done in 1998, giving a date between the early-fourth century and mid-third centuries BC.[125]

The branch-like form of the figures at Braak is repeated amongst most of the thirty-nine wooden *Holzidole* from the approximately seventy cultic enclosures that surrounded the sacred lake at Oberdorla (Thuringia, Germany), though the heads of the Oberdorla figures are even more schematic and none are as large as the Braak pair. Excavated between 1957 and 1967, Oberdorla has been inadequately studied and published, but is still the best documented and most important findspot known for Germanic wooden cult images.[126] Each of the enclosures around the lake consisted of a small fenced-in area containing altars, wooden figures, upright posts, pottery, and the remains of human and animal victims. Based on the ceramics and other finds, the enclosures range in date from the late Hallstatt period right through to the fourth century AD[127]

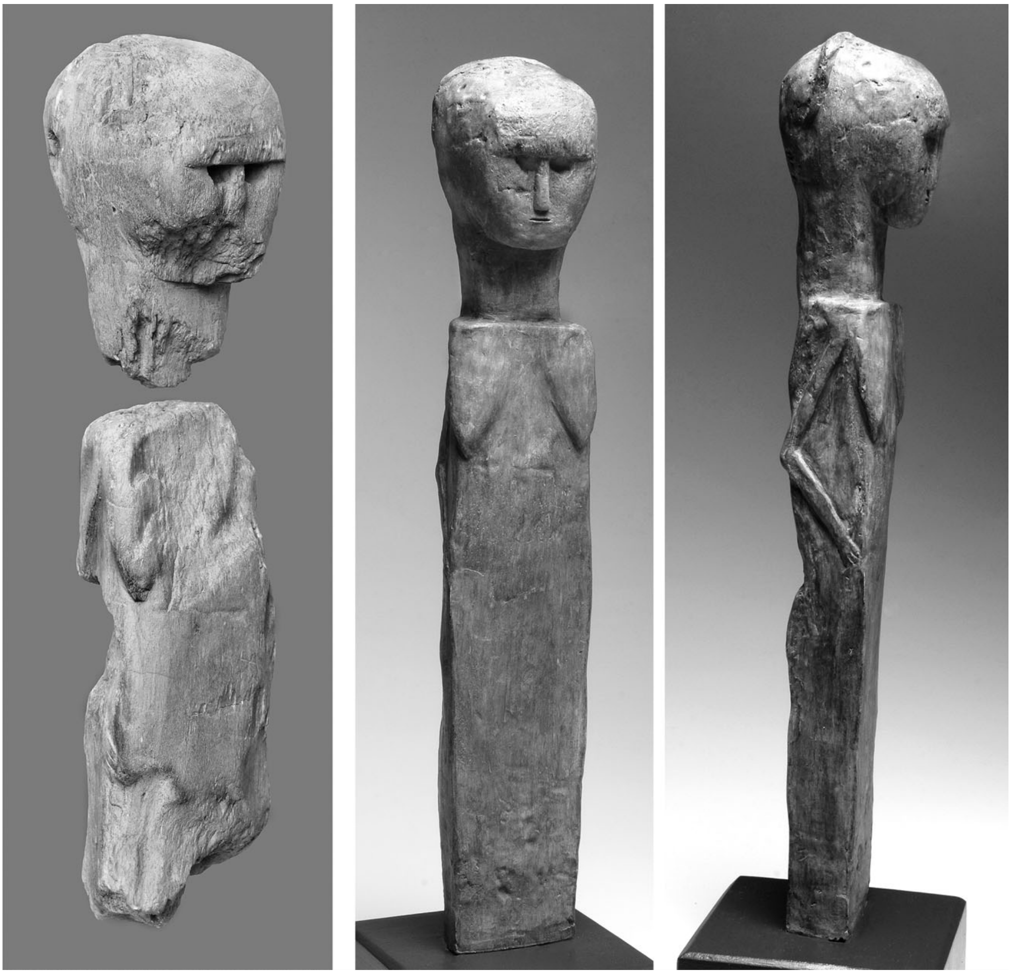
The so-called Diana of Oberdorla (**Fig. 2.20**) differs from the other figures at the site, as its features have been much more carefully modeled. The enclosure in which it was found belongs to the site's final period of use in the third or fourth century AD. Deer skulls, a spindle whorl, and a sarcophagus with a female skeleton were found in the same enclosure as the Diana and led to the excavator's popular, though entirely fanciful, connection of the figure



2.18 The wooden figures from Braak shortly after their discovery by peat cutters. (Museum für Archäologie Schloss Gottorf, Landesmuseen Schleswig-Holstein)



2.19 The wooden figures from Braak. H. 275 cm (male), 240 cm (female). (Museum für Archäologie Schloss Gottorf, Landesmuseen Schleswig-Holstein)

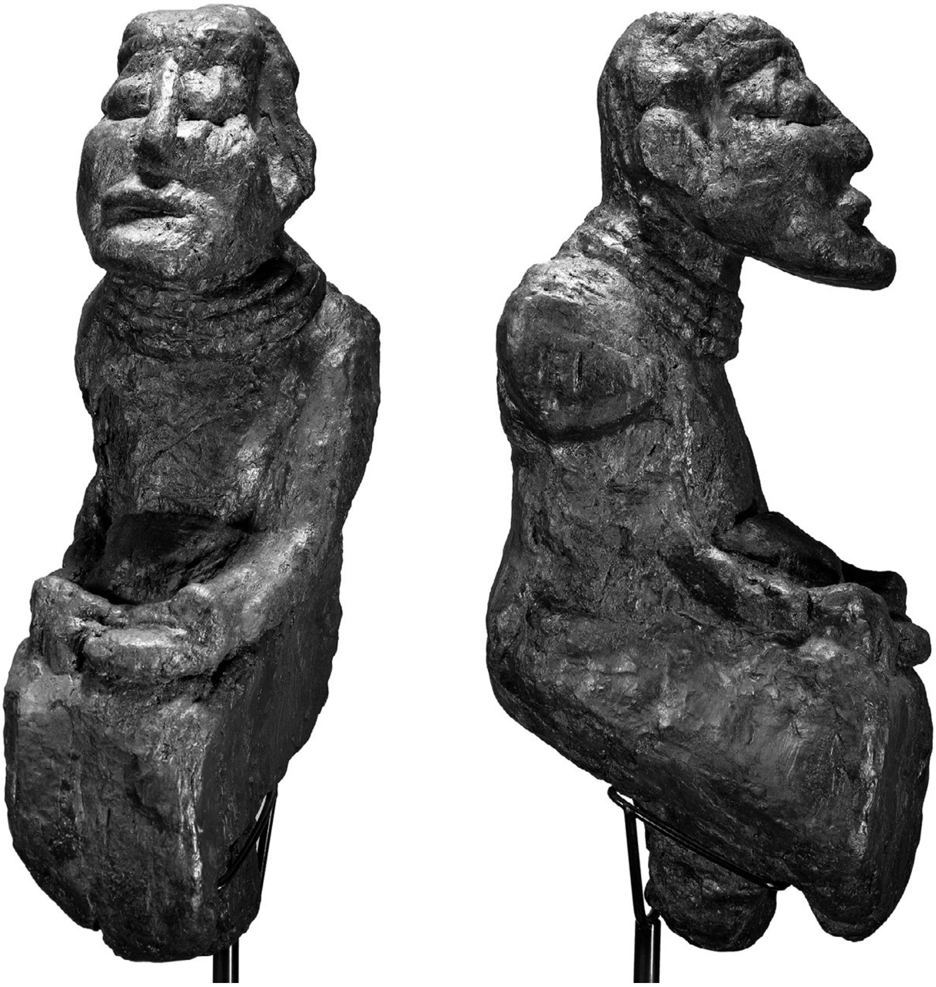


2.20 Original (left) and reconstruction of the Diana of Oberdorla, H. 32 cm. (© B. Stefan, Thüringisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologie, Weimar)

with the Roman goddess of the hunt.[128] Found in two pieces, the statue has the same simple facial features as the Braak figures and other *Holzidole* from Oberdorla, but with clearly demarcated breasts and skinny arms on its sides, plastic features which are unusual amongst the *Holzidole* as a whole.

Further south, a 90 cm high wooden statue found in a bog at Possendorf (Weimar, Germany) in 1859 is an isolated example of another *Holzidole* from a site comparable to the Oberdorla enclosures. The Possendorf figure was found surrounded by ceramic vessels next to a large bronze cauldron and a human skeleton, and follows the simplistic pattern of most *Holzidole*. Though the wooden statue is now lost, and known only from a drawing, the associated ceramic vessels and cauldron date to the first century BC.[129] Presumably they were used to hold liquid or food offerings that were presented to the wooden figure.

It is possible that Roman artistic concepts influenced later *Holzidole*, if only indirectly, as we see in sculptures like the 42-cm high statue from Rude Eskildstrup (Denmark), which is even more plastic in form than that of the Diana of Oberdorla, and far more detailed than most other *Holzidole*. It depicts a bearded male sitting with some indiscernible attribute resting in his lap (**Fig. 2.21**). The distinctive necklace of three bands around his neck is comparable to gold collars from Sweden that date to the fifth century AD, and raise the possibility that the figure depicts a real person or, like the stone sculptures discussed earlier, a divinized ancestor.[130] Whatever the figure's identity, the Rude Eskildstrup man included carved attributes and details not unlike those found in Roman sculptural art.



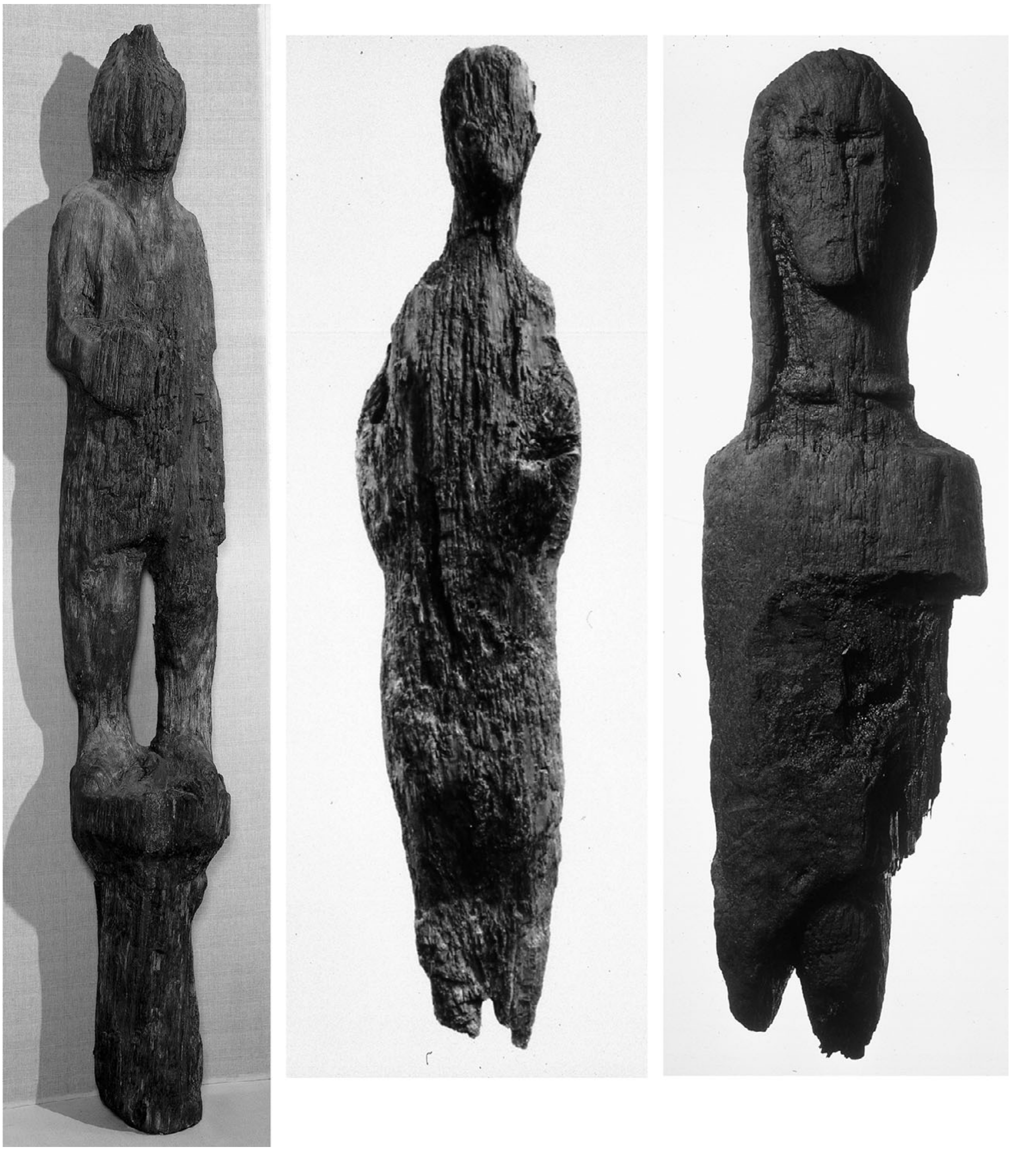
2.21 The wooden man from Rude Eskildrup, H. 42 cm. (National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen http://beta.samlinger.natmus.dk/DO/asset/5164, photo: Roberto Fortunaand Kira Ursem)

From northern Europe and Scandinavia, we may turn to those rare instances of wooden sculptures that have survived within the boundaries of the Roman Empire. A wooden figure of a male with an erect phallus from the Saône river near Seurre (Côte d'Or) and a post with a face from a beach at Soulac-sur-Mer (Gironde) extend the known distribution of Iron Age wooden sculpture well into eastern and southern France, though neither find is particularly well preserved or can be dated more accurately than the late Hallstatt or La Tène periods.[131] Nonetheless, both finds show that a tradition of Iron Age wooden sculpture, much like that of Scandinavia and northern Germany, existed within the Celtic world as well, and even in the region that would later become Roman Gaul and Germany.

Far better contextual information is available for three large wooden statues from Switzerland, all of which can be firmly dated to the first century BC. The first was found in Geneva in 1898 in the port of the late Iron Age oppidum (**Fig. 2.22, left**). It can be dated between 100 and 80 BC by the dendrochronology of both the statue and the timbers used in other structures in the port's construction. The over life-sized male figure stands on a tall base and wears a short tunic with a V-shaped collar that stops just above his knees. The face is damaged and it is unclear whether the top of the head depicts hair, a helmet, or a hood. The left arm is missing, but the right holds a circular object in front of the figure's chest. A long thin protrusion on the outside of the figure's right leg may represent a sword.[132]

The second was found in the early twentieth century at Villeneuve, at the very opposite end of Lake Geneva, where the Rhône River flow into the lake (**Fig. 2.22, middle**). The oak figure is badly damaged and only about half the height of the statue from Geneva, but it wears the same short tunic and has its right arm held bent in front of its chest. When the Villeneuve statue was donated to the Musée Léman in 1961, conservators made the remarkable discovery of three Celtic coins from the late first century BC wedged into a crack in the wood above the figure's right hand.[133] A more direct example of coins being given to the statue, and thus the active veneration of a monument, can hardly be imagined.

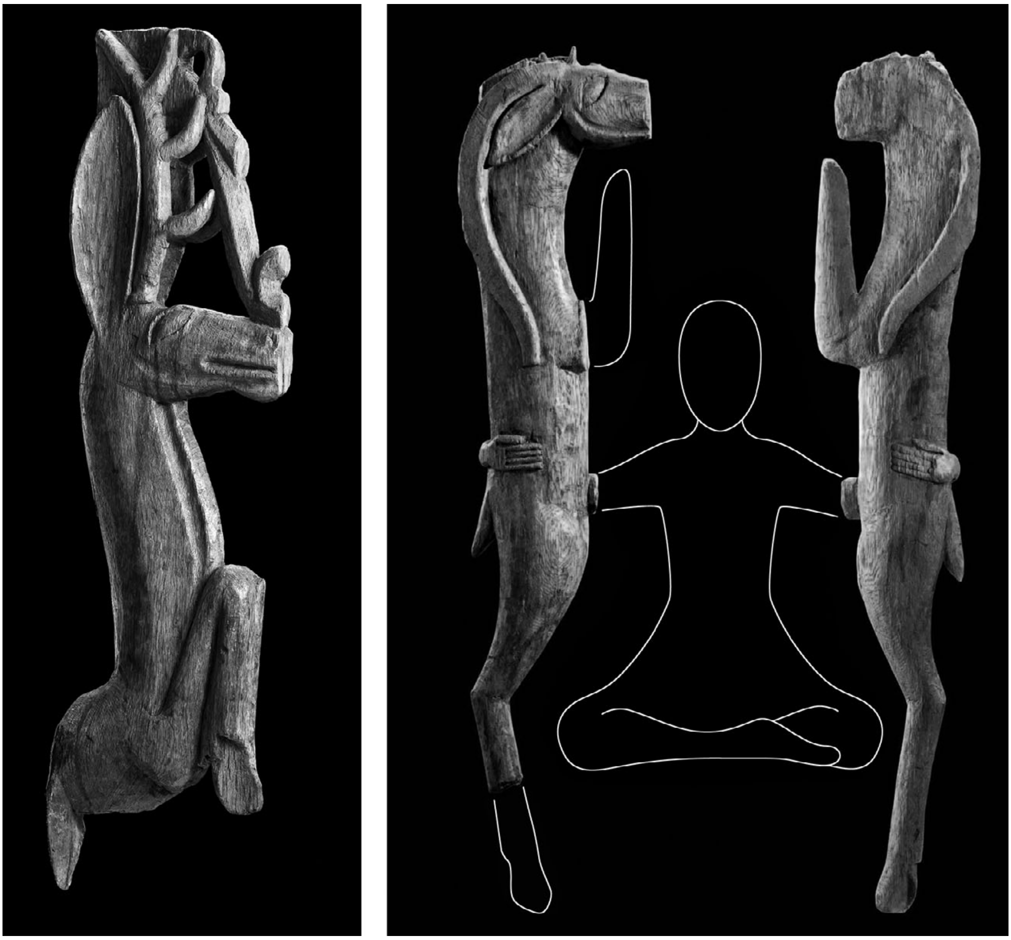
Finally, another oak statue was uncovered in a 1991 excavation at the oppidum of Yverdon-les-Bains (**Fig. 2.22, right**). The statue was found in a ditch surrounding the settlement not far from one of its gates, surrounded by the lower mandibles of thirty-five cows. Dendrochronology gives a felling date of 68 BC for the statue, which is supported by other material in the ditch that show the feature to have been filled around 50 BC. The 70 cm high sculpture depicts a beardless male with long hair combed to the right side of his head. The long neck wears a torc, while the right hand, which is represented in low relief along the figure's sides, holds a circular object, probably another torc.[134] As with the coins wedged into the statue from Villeneuve, the lower



2.22 Iron Age wooden statues from Switzerland. Left: Geneva H. 305 cm with base, figure alone 213 cm. Middle: Villeneuve, H. 115 cm. Right: Yverdon-les-Bains, H. 70 cm. (Left: © Musées d'art et d'histoire, Ville de Genève, Inv. No. 00426, photographer: Jean-Marc Yersin; Middle: © Musée cantonal d'archéologie et d'histoire, Lausanne; Right: Musée cantonal d'archéologie et d'histoire, Lausanne. Photo Y. André.)

mandibles around the statue, and its placement in a liminal setting near a gate, also speak strongly for the Yverdon statue being the recipient of sacrifices, or the focus of ritual activity.

In southern Germany, three wooden more sculptures (**Fig. 2.23**) were found in the bottom of a well at Fellbach-Schmiden (Baden-Württemberg), and are almost certainly monumental representations of divinities. Two of the figures



2.23 Fellbach-Schmiden wooden sculptures. Left: Deer, H. 77 cm. Right: Goats grasped by a lost figure, H. 86 and 87 cm. (Landesmuseum Württemberg, photos: P. Frankenstein / H. Zwietasch, reconstruction: T. Hoppe)

depict goats with long curved horns. They measure 87 and 76 cm in height, but are flattish artworks, having been carved from wooden boards 7.6 cm thick. Both goats have a human arm and hand wrapped around them just above the level of the hind legs, and a reconstruction has been proposed in which a seated divinity clutches a goat in each arm. This would make the group comparable to some later depictions of the goddess Epona, in which two horses are held by or flank the goddess (e.g. **Fig. 3.22**). The third figure from Fellbach-Schmiden depicts the upper half of a deer in a similar posture, with long horns and a raised front leg. Although the statue is broken just below the animal's front shoulder, it still measures 77 cm in height, and so must once have been from a considerably larger than the two goats. All three statues are oak, bear traces of yellow paint, and were carved so as to be viewed from either side.[135]

The planks forming the casing of the bottom of the well at Fellbach-Schmiden were dated by traditional dendrochronology to 123 BC, while the ceramic in the filling was from the late La Tène period.[136] Naturally enough, it was not considered acceptable to cross-section the wooden statues to obtain a dendrochronological date, but a new technique has recently been developed in which an industrial 3D tomograph is employed to obtain images of the interior of ancient wooden objects that are detailed enough to show growth rings. When applied to the sculptures from Fellbach-Schmiden, this non-destructive method produced a date of 127 BC, plus or minus 10 years, as well as the observation that all three sculptures were made from wood taken from the same tree. Thus it seems likely that the three statues were constructed and displayed together.[137]

Though many Iron Age wooden images appear crude and post-like now, they would have been far more distinctive in antiquity. Some have holes for the attachment of peg-like arms and phalluses, while a few had stones set in the eye-sockets.[138] The original surfaces of the statues would have been polished and painted, and some may have worn detachable clothes or jewelry as suggested by a piece of wool fabric found on a *Holzidole* from Rebild (Denmark), or the golden ring found on one of the female statues at Oberdorla.[139] A massive silver torc (Dm. 29.4 cm) found at Trichtingen, southern Germany, in 1928, as well as pieces of an enormous gold torc (Dm. 27 cm) found at Saint-Louis (Basel) in 1907, have both been interpreted as the adornment of wooden statues, since both are far too large for human use.[140] Two gold torcs, an armring, and a group of forty-six Celtic gold coins were buried in a ceramic container around the time of Caesar's conquests at Niederzier (Düren, Nord Rhein-Westfalen), and the discovery of a very large and solitary posthole next to the hoard's findspot has led to the suggestion that these precious objects were once either offerings to or the adornments of a *Holzidole*.[141] These sorts of added details would have provided a degree of individualization that the statues now lack.

Slight variations can also be found in the details of the carving that may express the figures' identities. On several British and Scandinavian *Holzidole*, one eye has been intentionally depicted larger than the other, suggesting a specific mythological figure is intended. The choice of wood used for sculptures may also have carried significant meaning.[142] In short, even the most simplistic wooden sculptures of the Iron Age could have included attributes and conveyed a large amount of information that communicated their identity to an Iron Age audience.

Iconographic links between wooden and stone Iron Age statues include the erect phalli of the *Holzidole* and the Seurre statue, and the use of torcs at Yverdon and Villeneuve. The positioning of flat arms across the chests of the Villeneuve statue, and the disproportionally small shield attributes held by the

Geneva and Yverdon statues are also mirrored in the Lord of the Glauberg, the Hirschlanden Warrior, and the *buste-socles* type. Stylistically, the statues all share the same crude facial features, consisting of a prominent brow ridge and nose forming a T-shaped pattern, a straight set mouth, and the large oval protruding eyes. In all likelihood, Iron Age stone statues copied the patterns and techniques of wooden sculpture, which was probably the more common medium for sculptural art.

Unlike the stone statues, many of which are connected with tumuli, the wooden statues of the Iron Age come from more diverse findspots. The Oberdorla and Possendorf figures are from open-air sanctuaries, while the finds associated with the Yverdon statue also point to a ritual context, perhaps the "liminal place" between the inside and outside of the oppidum. There is also evidence for the direct veneration of wooden sculptures in the coins found in the Villeneuve statue, as well as the offerings and sacrifices that seem to have taken place in front of the *Holzidole* and Yverdon statues. While stone statues of the Iron Age are suggestive of an ancestor cult, the wooden statues are more easily understood as representing divinities.

THE ORIGINS AND ICONOGRAPHY OF IRON AGE SCULPTURE IN WESTERN EUROPE

If nothing else, the statues discussed here show that a tradition of sculptural art existed in the Celtic and Germanic world as early as the sixth century BC. The existence of this tradition is a relatively recent discovery, and a good deal of ink has already been spilt trying to identify its origins. The sixth and fifth centuries BC correspond to a period in which Iron Age Europe developed substantial contacts with the Mediterranean world, as finds of Greek pottery and Italic bronze vessels in tumuli reveal. This cross-cultural contact was probably greatly stimulated by the establishment of a Greek colony at Massalia, modern Marseille, in southern France in 600 BC. Thus there has been a common trend amongst art historians and archaeologists to connect the Iron Age sculpture of southern France and Germany with Greek, Etruscan, and Italic art, interpreting individual sculptural traditions as the by-products of trade contacts with the Mediterranean world.[143]

Though the nudity and stiff posture of some Iron Age statues might call to mind Greek *kouroi,* and the arms folded over the chest or the erect phalli of others may point to Italic and Etruscan prototypes, the similarities to Mediterranean art end there.[144] Other major elements of Iron Age sculpture, such as leaf-shaped hats, composite armor, and torcs, as well as figures seated in a cross-legged posture, find no Mediterranean parallels whatsoever.[145] At the very most, we might say that the tradition of carving sculptures in stone rather than wood was one that was inspired by Mediterranean art, but even this conclusion seems unnecessary. The many examples of Iron Age sculpture now known reveal that the phenomenon is too extensive to be the result of isolated contacts with a foreign sculpture-producing society.

The published discourse on the origins of Celtic sculpture has generally had very little to say about the role of wooden images, which must have been far more common than those made of stone.[146] After all, the architecture of the Iron Age was largely wooden, and as such, wood would have been a natural first choice for sculptors. The surviving examples discussed here probably represent only a tiny fraction of what must have once been in circulation. Surely it is possible that the northern Iron Age world developed a sculptural tradition of its own that was quite independent of Greek and Mediterranean influence.

More important than the origins of Iron Age sculpture is the question of its purpose and social function. Who do the statues represent, and for what were they used? The general format, style, and attributes of Iron Age sculpture all show a surprising degree of consistency whether they are wood, metal, or stone. We are dealing with statues with a relatively static posture that were meant to be viewed frontally. The two faces of the Holzgerlingen stela and the bicephalic sculpture from Roquepertuse are exceptions to the rule.[147] Facial expressions and interest in portraiture is generally minimal, and neither anatomical accuracy nor realistic proportions were of particular interest to the artists. Males dominate the human figures, though we have early representations of a woman at Vix and Entremont in stone, as well as examples of female *Holzidole* at Braak or Oberdorla. Apart from the wooden goats and deer from Fellbach-Schmiden and an eagle at Roquepertuse, animals are rare, which is surprising if a purely naturalistic view of Celtic and Germanic religion is accepted.

Any surviving clue to the identity of the figures represented must be sought first in their iconography, though we may reasonably ask whether Iron Age art used attributes as identifiers in the same way that Greek or Roman art did. Certainly attributes and identifying markers are less prominent in Iron Age sculpture as it has survived, but we have already seen that some Iron Age sculptures, especially wooden ones, were supplemented with detachable clothes and attributes. The identity of the figures depicted could also have been established through other means that are also lost to us – e.g. ritual storytelling or via their placement and context.

However limited its scope, the surviving iconography of Iron Age sculpture contains broad thematic similarities across a very large region. These sculptures are filled with symbols of elite status and militaristic power. The arms and armor worn and held by the subjects stress their martial prowess, an ubiquitous value in both Germanic and Celtic society. At Entremont, the heads of defeated enemies point to success in battle and the practice of headhunting. The erect phalli might be indicative of potency, masculinity, and fertility, while other jewelry in addition to the torcs can be seen as representative of wealth and elite status.

The ubiquitous torcs are less straightforward than one might think. Torcs are worn by divinities on Iron Age artworks like the Gundestrup cauldron, and also in later Romano-Celtic art. We have also seen that the massive torcs from Trichtingen and Saint-Louis were probably worn by wooden idols. Many Iron Age hoards of gold and silver torcs, often including coins and scrap metal, have been interpreted as ritual deposits, including the Niedrezier finds mentioned earlier.[148] All of this seems to suggest a divine significance for the neck adornment, but gold and silver torcs are also found in elite Iron Age burials as well, are described in Greek and Roman texts as being worn by Celtic warriors, and appear in Hellenistic and Roman artistic representations of Gauls, as, for instance, on the famous Hellenistic Dying Gaul. Thus they were also real objects that could be worn by important living individuals, and are usually interpreted as symbols of wealth, power, and authority that were appropriate for both gods and humans.[149]

In the Roman period, the meaning of the torc changed somewhat. In Britain, copper-alloy beaded torcs appear to have been worn by a much broader section of society, and a freedwoman named Regina is even depicted wearing one on her tombstone at South Shields (*Arbeia*).[150] Perhaps the torc had also become a symbol of non-Roman native identity, but this does not mean that its earlier aspect as a status symbol was lost, simply that it was now more widely used.

The fact that many Iron Age stone sculptures can be connected to tumuli, even if in sanctuaries next to them, as at Glauberg and Vix, puts many of these statues within the realm of funerary cult. The matching equipment of the Lord of the Glauberg and the grave goods of a nearby burial suggests that at least some of the statues represent real people, or at least a class of person. Iron Age tumuli were places of repetitive communal ritual over very long periods of time, as the processional way and ritual enclosures at the Glauberg and Vix suggests. The re-use and re-visitation of older tumuli recently demonstrated at a number of Dutch tumuli, and the re-mounding of older tumuli, notably at Frankfurter Stadtwald, show that these prehistoric monuments could be functional and meaningful for many centuries.[151] Tumuli were more than just places for storing and remembering the dead, and the statues associated them were probably much more than just grave markers.

The sculptures from Roquepertuse, Glanum, Entremont, and Paule were all found inside settlements, though this may not have been their original context at the first two sites. Though we have no information for Paule, the statues from the other three sites were displayed in public in porticus-like structures that can be interpreted as sanctuaries. It is possible that these sculptures had been moved into a central settlement from funerary settings in the countryside, as at least a few were centuries old when they were first displayed. If so, this only further emphasizes the importance of these statues as cult objects to the societies that created them.

Other Iron Age statues are also connected to places of possible cultic significance. The Yverdon statue was placed at the entrance to an oppidum, and the *buste-socle* at Nîmes on the outskirts of the settlement, both liminal locations. The wooden statues from Oberdorla were all found within ritual enclosures near a lake, and the bronze warrior from Saint-Maur was found buried inside an early Roman period sanctuary.

In sum, the iconography and contexts of Iron Age statues suggests that they were situated somewhere between the realm of funerary and religious art. The stone sculptures are often interpreted as depictions of heroes, deified mortals who were the focus of a long-lasting ancestor cult.[152] Perhaps we are dealing with the most celebrated warriors and chieftains of individual tribes, or the founding figures of settlements. Some prehistoric tumuli and other monuments were actually incorporated into Romano-Celtic temple sites, suggesting ancestor cults could survive into the post conquest period.[153] The statues from Glanum, Entremont, and Paule were displayed right up to the Roman conquest, and in the next chapter we will see a Roman representation of a divinity whose iconography seems to be derived from the seated warriors of the early Iron Age.

If some of the statues do represent divinized ancestors and heroes, what was their function as objects? Initially they may have been the decorative part of funerary monuments, but it seems that they later evolved into venerated cult images, or even idols. That they were used in cult practices is beyond dispute, since at Vix, Glanum, Possendorf, Braak, Nîmes, Villeneuve, and Geneva we have seen the statues as the direct recipients of offerings. These objects were being used a means of communicating with either the gods or the dead. Perhaps as these images aged, their sense of agency increased, and connections with deceased individuals slowly became connections to tribal gods.

The interpretation of the statues as divinized ancestors and heroes fits well with recent anthropological interpretations of Iron Age religious practices as a means of reinforcing and reproducing social structures. It was the elites of Celtic society who could host feasts, make mass sacrifices of treasure, organize weapon deposits, and thus it was they who communicated directly with the divine.[154] A cult of ancestors would have assured the aristocracy of the Iron Age world a stronger grip on power, and in many ways the construct is not so very different from the claims to divine ancestry made by Rome's leaders and elite families. The main paraphernalia of this cult were the tumuli and funerary complexes, ritual enclosures, pits, and the idols that depicted the worshiped ancestors. With the arrival of the Romans, and the subsequent changes in social structure, the creation of cult images and funerary monuments of this kind was no longer possible, but that does not mean that the older statues or funerary monuments suddenly went away.

The intentional damage and circumstances of deposition of some Iron Age statues suggests that they underwent special treatment that corresponded to their high religious value. The figures from Roquepertuse, Lattes, and Glanum were decapitated and damaged, while two of the statues from the Glauberg were broken into tiny fragments before entering the ditch along with their more or less intact brother. This damage may have accompanied the violent destruction of the settlements where the statues were found, with aggressors humiliating and destroying the ancestral gods of a community they had just conquered. It is certainly tempting to see the decapitation of many of these statues as analogous to the actual practice of head-hunting. On the other hand, the careful burial of the bronze warrior statue at Saint-Maur seems to speak for a very different and respectful treatment of an object that continued to retain its supernatural power and agency. For now we may note that this sort of later treatment speaks to a cult status for these statues, and leave the question of why cult images are mutilated and buried for Chapter 6.

CONCLUSIONS

In light of this new archaeological evidence, much of it obtained in the last thirty years, the final pillar of the aniconic theory of pre-Roman Celtic and Germanic religion collapses. Anthropomorphic images of gods and divinized ancestors were present in the Hallstatt period and are attested down to the end of La Tène. The rare Iron Age stone and metal statues we now know of were probably supplemented by a much larger body of wooden images of which only a tiny fraction of the whole population has survived. In short, images of the gods had a long history in both northern Europe and at Rome that long predated the Roman imperial period, and it was this body of religious art that formed the atmosphere in which later cult images and idols would develop.

Those ancient authors who viewed Roman idols as a foreign introduction of the Etruscans, and those who presented a picture of barbarian worship as entirely aniconic, were simply reflecting their own philosophical and religious preferences. There is no reason to favor their testimony in the face of so much contradictory evidence, unless perhaps it is our own desire to idealize the religious values of the past by reconstructing them to our own liking. The origin stories and connections to the mythological past were part of the birth process of Roman idols, a process that was just as important as the rituals of their consecration which we are unable to reconstruct. These stories served to legitimize idols by stressing their antiquity, diverting attention from their status as man-made objects, and thus serving to bestow agency upon them.

Etruscan influence in Rome, the flood of Greek works of art to Rome in the third century BC, or the arrival of the Romans in Gaul and Germany, still had a major impact on religious art. These events not only brought new types of cult images to Rome and her provinces, but also spurred internal changes in how the gods were understood and represented. Just as luxurious Greek statues drove away Cato's beloved terracotta images, Roman influence on Celtic and Germanic cultures changed how the gods were depicted and ushered in the births of new kinds of cult image. But new cult images and idols did not appear either *ex nihilo* or all at once. Instead, they followed in the tradition of pre-Roman cult images, which remained in circulation after the Roman conquest. While the Hercules Fictilis and other ancient statues were still on display in their temples in the first century AD in Rome, the wooden idols of the Iron Age also continued to be venerated in Gaul and Germany after the Roman conquest. In both regions, old and new idols and other cult images co-existed side-by-side for centuries. In the next chapter, we will see how the newly discovered existence of an Iron Age tradition of cult images affects our understanding of the birth and development of Romano-Celtic religious images.

THREE

THE BIRTH OF CULT IMAGES

Continuity and Innovation in the Imperial Period

INTRODUCTION: THE NATURE OF ROMAN PROVINCIAL SCULPTURE

The few cult images that survive from Iron Age Western Europe are utterly eclipsed by the vast number of images of divinities that date to the Roman period. From the conquest to the end of the Imperial period, religious sculptures and artworks were continuously produced in the Roman West. A rough inventory of Roman sculpture from Gaul and Germany was begun in 1908 by Émile Espérandieu, and had recorded nearly 8,000 monuments with the publication of its eleventh and final volume in 1938. Still a standard reference, Espérandieu's work is by no means exhaustive, and new discoveries and unpublished Roman provincial sculptures are still being added to the volumes of the "*Nouvel Espérandieu*," and the *Corpus Signorum Imperium Romanum* (CSIR).[1] The study of Roman provincial sculpture has long been neglected, and it is only comparatively recently that this has begun to change. Without delving too deeply into the many questions about the nature of Roman provincial art, this chapter focuses on the birth of cult images in Roman Gaul and Germany, looking at the appearance and origins of some of the main types of cult images in this region during the imperial period.

As a whole, we may divide Roman provincial representations of divinities into four main categories:

(1) Conventionally "Roman" representations of gods. Images in this category are by far the most abundant, and follow the established patterns of Mediterranean Greek and Roman iconography.
(2) Depictions of "native" Celtic or Germanic gods, for which there are no obvious Greek or Roman iconographic precedents.
(3) Representations that combine Roman and native iconography.
(4) Depictions of "oriental" divinities that develop in the Imperial period and can be found throughout the Roman Empire, of which the most plentiful are the monuments of Mithraism.

These categories are not an ancient construct, but one that I propose purely for the convenience of discussing this material. These four divisions refer strictly to the iconography, physical form, attributes, and postures of the divinities represented, and not to their aesthetic quality or artistic style. In all four groups, we find crude representations that are sometimes described as "local" or "provincial" in terms of the quality of their carving, but it was primarily the iconography of divinities that allowed viewers to identify them.

The existence of distinctive provincial styles of sculpture in different regions was a factor of the local market, the availability of competent sculptors, and the quality of local stone.[2] The remarkably plastic marble that was preferred for ancient Mediterranean sculpture was simply not readily available in Gaul and Germany, so less easily-worked sandstones and limestones were generally used instead. These materials are certainly part of what gives Roman provincial sculpture its distinctive appearance, but any application of qualitative stylistic criteria to this material, in which provincial art is compared to the artistic standards of the Mediterranean world, can hardly fail to be influenced by a modern sense of what good ancient art *should* look like.[3] For this reason, I focus on the origins and appearance of iconographies, with their somewhat more objective attributes and forms, rather than try to attempt to date the appearance of local or regional styles of provincial sculpture.

Provincial religious art also contains unorthodox pairings and combinations of Roman and native divinities, for which an origin in Celtic or Germanic mythology may be assumed. These combinations are of less interest here than the birth of the iconographies of the deities themselves. Similarly, the names of divinities used in dedications and other inscriptions can be divided into the same four categories as those listed above. Thus we have inscriptions recording votive dedications to Mercury and Jupiter, but also to the purely Celtic Nehalennia, Cernunnos, Sirona, and Rosmerta, as well as hybrid names such as Jupiter Taranis, Mars Caturix, Sulis Minerva, or Apollo Grannus. These combined theonyms, or the use of Roman theonyms to describe gods with obviously native iconography, are the result of a process referred to by modern scholars as the "*interpretatio Romana*" in which Celts, Germans, and Romans mutually recognized and equated their own divinities in the pantheons of one another.[4] The study of Romano-Celtic theonyms is properly the domain of epigraphy, and like the unorthodox pairings and combinations of divinities, is also of secondary importance to the present discussion.

The combined and native types of representations are one of our main sources of information about pre-Roman Celtic and Germanic deities. But whether or not these representations accurately reflect the Iron Age is datable, since most of them were made between the mid-second and third centuries AD, the height of the imperial period.[5] If these images represent the last gasp of native religion in the Roman world, then one would expect all or at least most of them to date to the early first century AD. One recent trend has been to explain the apparently native and hybrid divinities as purely Roman period inventions, with no substantial relationship to pre-Roman indigenous art or religion. This theory is implicitly supported by the aniconic theory of Iron Age religion – since there were no pre-Roman images of native divinities, all Roman period images must be new developments.[6] But in the previous chapter the aniconic theory was found to be untrue, and our understanding of the development of Roman period native imagery in the Roman West needs to be revised.

In this chapter, I explore the genesis of cult images in Gaul and Germany, making the case for a degree of continuity from the Iron Age to the Roman period for "native" images and monument types. After discussing some of the issues that surround provincial cult images in general, and the ethnic identity of their makers, I will then examine the evidence for the continued use of Iron Age idols in the Roman period, and the role of wooden sculpture as a transmitter of iconographic ideas. Undoubtedly, Roman period representations of Celtic and Germanic divinities were influenced by Roman artistic norms, and differed from their Iron Age predecessors, but the details of their iconography and form were neither Roman fiction nor invention.

This discussion of native religious imagery is followed by a very brief survey of canonically Roman cult images, which serves to illustrate how widespread and universally accepted Mediterranean Roman iconography was, and how different stylistic forms could be found in both the cities and the countryside. Finally, I will introduce a major innovation in cult images which could be found throughout the Roman world with the arrival of the so-called oriental or mystery religions. The idols of the god Mithras and other mystery cults were utterly different to anything that the Roman world had seen before, and allowed for new kinds of interaction between cult images and worshipers. In sum, the imperial period saw a continued use of Iron Age cult images and iconographic ideas, but also the births of many kinds of cult images.

QUESTIONS OF IDENTITY AND NATIVE GODS

Since most representations of native and Roman gods from Gaul and Germany are votive dedications, and all were commissioned by individuals living in the provinces, no study of Romano-Celtic art can avoid the question of the intention that lay behind them and the identity of their dedicators. Did some worshipers prefer to dedicate images of gods or goddesses that most closely correlated to their own sense of identity as Romans, Celts, or Germans? In the past thirty years, the whole question of provincial identity in the Roman West has become almost an obsession of historians and archaeologists alike.[7] How did the inhabitants of the Roman Empire, and Gaul and Germany in particular, view themselves in terms of ethnic identity?

For most of the twentieth century, Roman values were seen as nothing more than a thin veneer that was painted over a provincial population that remained essentially Celtic and Germanic at heart. More recent models of Romanization and the development of Roman provincial identity, however, have become increasingly complex, recognizing local variation, the differences between rich and poor, town and country, and military and civilian. On the whole, the thin-veneer models of provincial society have been replaced by the view that most inhabitants of Gaul and Germany willingly adopted Roman identities, or at least Roman provincial identities, and did so relatively quickly. Roman style towns and villages, buildings, pottery, and systems of government were widespread in the provinces by the end of the first century AD. By this point, the people of Gaul and Germany probably no longer thought of themselves as members of Celtic and Germanic tribes first, but as inhabitants of a Roman province. Whether this process was due to the advantages that participation in imperial society offered, was the result of acculturation and creolization, or was systemically enforced by colonialist masters, is liable to remain a subject of long-term debate.[8]

As far as the question of provincial identity relates to the syncretism or *interpretatio* of native and Roman gods, most scholars agree that the process was some kind of natural development that took place under a Roman government that only rarely interfered with or restricted the religious practices of its subjects.[9] It was not a case of Romans worshiping Roman gods and Celts worshiping Celtic gods, but rather members of the Roman Empire worshiping local and regional divinities alike in an increasingly Roman manner. But if individuals eagerly adopted a Roman way of life, or had it forced down their throats, then the appearance and popularity of much native iconography and native theonyms in the second and third century AD, when imperial ideals should have long since solidified, is difficult to explain.[10] Since all other aspects of society had irrevocably moved toward *romanitas*, why did the realm of religion suddenly take turn back toward its Iron Age state?

The response of recent scholarship is that the supposedly "native" monuments and images are really the products of Roman innovation, and were largely or entirely unrelated to pre-Roman art or religious practices. Wolfgang Spickermann has argued that the "*interpretatio*" part of Roman provincial religion was not so much the syncretism of pre-Roman Germanic and Celtic divinities with Roman divinities, but the creation of an entirely new set of provincial deities. The appearance of anthropomorphic images of native gods that followed Hellenistic-Roman prototypes was a major aspect of this development. Thus the "native" gods of the Roman imperial period and their images were entirely new inventions, and appear later rather than earlier in provincial religious history. Prior to this point, the native divinities simply remained in their original and aniconic phase of worship.[11]

Greg Woolf has also presented the worship of indigenous gods in anthropomorphic form as a provincial development: "General conventions had to be agreed, such as how to deal with gods traditionally imagined in the form of animals, and particular iconographic schemes had to be devised to represent gods like Sucellus."[12] But Woolf has also presented a new explanation for the abundance of local divinities at the height of the imperial period, suggesting that individuals preferred to make dedications to native divinities in response to their awareness of being part of a global world. By the second century AD, simply being Roman was no longer terribly special, so dedicators emphasized their local connections instead. Divinities like the Matronae, and monuments such as the Jupiter columns, were developed as a means by which local identity could be expressed. Similarly, the later popularity of eastern and Egyptian cults lay partly in the fact that they offered an exotic foreign element that differed from the norms of regular imperial cults.[13] Thus Romano-Celtic divinities are not the inventions of Roman colonial power, nor a token of resistance to such a power, but rather a by-product of the globally aware inhabitants of the Roman Empire.

Recent post-colonialist approaches have envisioned the use of native iconography as a form of active resistance to Roman rule, with the crude style of other provincial sculptures as a conscious choice to reject Mediterranean artistic conventions in favor of indigenous ones.[14] Alternatively, the combination of native and Roman gods, both in inscriptions and on sculpted monuments, has been interpreted as a Roman method of forcing oppressed natives to accept the gods of their Roman overlords.[15] But both models imply a sort of forceful intervention in religious matters on the part of Roman authorities for which there is very little evidence.

In my opinion, none of these models satisfactorily addresses the origins of native iconography. These approaches to Romano-Celtic religious art rely heavily on the aniconic theory of Iron Age religion, assuming that the native cults remained in an aniconic phase for the first hundred years or so of Roman rule. If second- and third-century native images were some kind of invention, for whatever reason, then where did the attributes, forms, and costumes of the supposedly new native iconographies come from? They appear in large numbers in a very short space of time, and are so uniform over such wide areas that their appearance cannot be based purely on an orally transmitted mythology alone. For these same reasons, it is improbable that single prototypes served as models for all native representations, as has been suggested for the Matronae and the provincial Jupiter columns.

The most probable explanation of widespread native iconography is that these native images had already achieved iconographic unity over a long period of time prior to the second century AD. This uniformity stemmed from Iron Age and early Roman period images, especially in wood, which have been almost entirely lost to us. The new native images were different from their predecessors in many ways, and had adopted many aspects of Roman art, but concrete elements such as attributes, postures, and dress were taken directly from earlier artistic tradition.

The real innovation of the second and third centuries AD was not so much iconographic, or the creation of new and anthropomorphic provincial divinities, but was an increased preference for stone monuments resulting from the Roman ritual of the vow. This development had far more to do with a rise in personal affluence in the provinces than a sense of ethnicity. It belongs to a broader monumentalizing trend in provincial Roman religion that also saw half-timber and wooden temples replaced with stone ones. Prior to this point, Iron Age idols had continued to be worshiped and wood was still a popular medium for new cult images. Naturally enough, the new stone sculptures looked more Roman than their predecessors, and may even have syncretized more of the iconographic language of Roman art, but their native elements were transmitted directly from an indigenous pre-Roman tradition of religious art. We may explore this thesis by considering first evidence for the continued use of Iron Age cult images in the Roman period, and then the evidence for wooden religious sculpture.

ANICONIC IDOLS AND THE RE-USE OF PREHISTORIC MONUMENTS IN THE ROMAN PERIOD

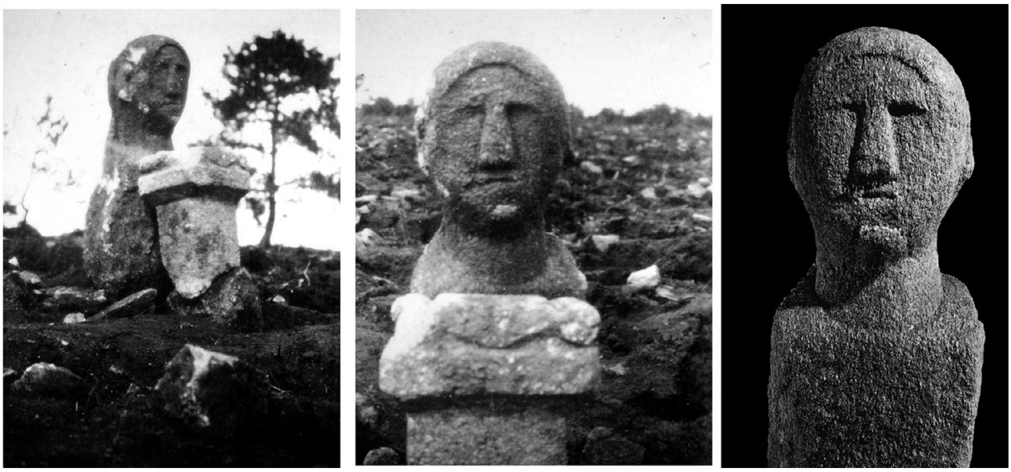
In the previous chapter, we saw that it is very unlikely that figural depictions of the gods evolved out of a purely aniconic religion in the way that many ancient and modern texts suggest, whether in Greece, Rome, or Iron Age Europe. Rome's most ancient wooden and terracotta cult images could still be seen in temples in the first century AD and later. The veneration of non-figural aniconic sacred objects also continued even when figural images of the gods are known to have been commonplace. The many examples of sacred stones that continued to be venerated in the later Greek world include an outcropping of bedrock in the so-called Crossroads Shrine of the Athenian Agora, the conical stone of Aphrodite from Paphos, and a similar stone of Zeus Kasios that appears inside a temple on second century coins of Seleukia Pieria.[16] To this collection of Greek sacred stones, we may also add the sacred oak from the Temple of Zeus at Dodonna, and all the other sacred trees visited and described by Pausanias in the second century AD.[17]

At Rome, aniconic worship also continued in the Late Republican and imperial periods. Examples include the black stone of Magna Mater, the fire of Vesta, and the snake of Aesculapius, each of which was connected with a foundational event from Rome's early history. Living trees could also be the focus of ritual attention, both singly, as in the case of the Ficus Ruminalis, which was said to mark the site where Romulus and Remus were cradled, or in the form of sacred woods, as at the Grove of Dea Dia that was tended by the Arval Brethren just outside of Rome.[18] The function of sacred trees could range from enhancing a sacred area, by connecting it with a mythical event or specific divinity, to receiving ritual attention and sacrifice.[19]

In Gaul and Germany, evidence for the continued veneration of Iron Age statues and aniconic objects in the Roman period confirms that pre-Roman art could have shaped the form of later "native' cult images. It may be recalled that some of the monuments discussed in the previous chapter were actually found in Roman contexts – the Warrior from Saint-Maur and possibly the *buste-socles* from Molesme and Nîmes. Was the Warrior from Saint-Maur ritually buried in the Roman period when it was replaced by a Roman style representation? We do not know, but there is no doubt about when it was buried.

Yet another possible instance of the continued use of Iron Age statues in the Roman period has been documented at La-Vraie-Croix (Morbihan), where a granite *buste-socle* type statue was found together with a slightly smaller Roman altar (**Fig. 3.1**), suggesting that the statue remained the recipient of sacrifices in the Roman period.[20] There is no reason why the Roman conquest should have stripped Iron Age idols of their significance, especially if we consider the general non-interference policy of the Romans. Even as new cult images and idols were created and born in the Roman period, the lives of the older cult images continued.

Other Iron Age cult monuments were actually modified in the Roman period, of which the Menhir of Kernuz (**Fig. 2.3**), is perhaps the most significant. This prehistoric standing stone was found in 1878 at Kervadel (near Plobannalec, Finistère) in Brittany, but is named for the Château de Kernuz to which it was moved and displayed in the nineteenth century. The once plain stone was augmented with four panels with relief images in the Roman period. The relief carvings are usually dated to the first century AD because of their rather crude style and inclusion of non-Roman attributes, but they could be later.[21]



3.1 La-Vraie-Croix (Morbihan) Iron Age buste-socle (granite, H. 80 cm) and associated Roman altar (granite, H. 55 cm) as found (left two images), and in the museum today (right). (© Archives de la Société polymathique du Morbihan and Collection Musée de Vannes, fonds SPM)

The first panel depicts Mercury, wearing a petasos and holding a purse and caduceus, with a smaller unidentified figure at his left side. The figure in the next panel is usually identified as Hercules, with a club in his upraised right hand and lion skin in his left, though it could possibly be Jupiter with a thunderbolt and a wheel, a Romano-Celtic attribute of the god. The figure in the third panel is quite clearly Mars, wearing a helmet, holding an inverted spear in his right hand, and with his left hand resting on a circular shield. The final panel, which depicts two figures of roughly the same size, is more difficult. The robed female figure is perhaps Juno, while the figure to her left reaches backward with its right hand to a rectangular object behinds its back, while a small animal, perhaps a dog or a deer, stands to its left. If the rectangular object is a quiver, then the figure could either be Apollo or, perhaps more likely, Diana. The iconography of the reliefs combines Roman and native visual language in a manner that we will consider more closely later in this chapter.

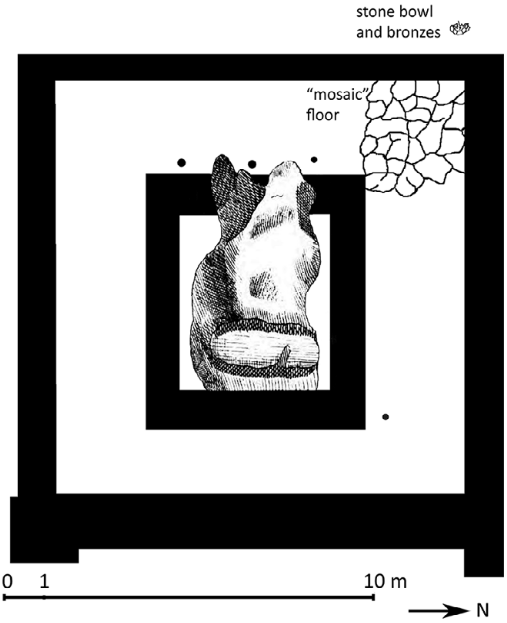
The menhir itself is, of course, of much greater antiquity than the carvings, and could date anywhere from the Neolithic to the late Iron Age, though the most recent considerations have suggested it is of an Iron Age date.[22] Whatever its prehistoric date, what matters is that the monument had either retained its function and ritual significance for many centuries, or had been reinterpreted as a ritual object in the Roman period. Like tumuli, menhirs are highly visible monuments that leave a heavy impact on a landscape. The addition of the reliefs to the Menhir of Kernuz suggest an enhancement of its religious significance, or perhaps a modification to suit the tastes and needs of imperial period worshipers. The combination of four divinities on the base of the pillar-like monument has been compared to the square bases (*Viergöttersteine*) of the

Jupiter columns, and to the Pillar of the Sailors, Roman period monuments to which we will turn shortly.[23]

The Menhir of Kernuz is not the only prehistoric standing stone to have been modified in the Roman period. Another enormous prehistoric stone (H. 6.8 m), the so-called Gollenstein, located near Bleiskastell (Saarland), dates to the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age, and was also augmented with a relief figure in the Roman period. Now badly worn and damaged by modern graffiti, the figure has been variously identified as Diana or Jupiter Taranis. Some early descriptions record an illegible Latin inscription, which is now completely lost.[24] Although indecipherable, an inscription in Celtic was added to a menhir near Vieux Poitiers (Cenon, Vienne) in the first century AD, and is yet another indication of the continuity of these aniconic cult monuments into the Roman period.[25]

A very skeptical critic might argue that the addition of reliefs to the Menhir of Kernuz or the Gollenstein did not necessarily mean that their pre-Roman cult significance was recognized, but that they were just handy lumps of well-positioned stone. But such a criticism is refuted by discoveries at Triguères and Le Gué-de-Sciaux, where prehistoric standing stones were incorporated into Roman cult buildings and structures. At Triguères, a prehistoric dolmen of three standing stones, known locally the "La Roche du Vieux-Garçon," became the subject of a formal excavation in 1860, after numerous attempts by local peasants had been made to extract treasure believed to be hidden below them.[26] The excavations exposed the walls of a Romano-Celtic style temple, the central cella of which enveloped the prehistoric monument completely (**Fig. 3.2**). It seems most likely that the standing stones stuck out from an unroofed cella, but the gallery that surrounded it was floored what the excavators described as a crude mosaic of irregularly shaped bricks. Coins from both the cella and its gallery ranged from the late Iron Age to Roman periods, while a deposit of bronze objects, including a sieve and bucket, as well as a stone bowl was uncovered on the west side of the building.[27]

Sadly, the temple at Triguères (Loiret) was broken up by the landowner not long after it was exposed, leaving many



3.2 Plan of the Romano-Celtic temple at Triguères. The black dots represent coin finds. (Redrawn by the author from Bouthet de Monvel 1863, fig. 5) important questions unanswered, but a close, if smaller, parallel was found in 2005 at Le Gué-de-Sciaux in Antigny (Vienne) and now awaits full publication. The site is a late La Tène period ritual enclosure upon which Roman buildings, presumably temples, were later constructed. These Roman constructions include a mortar casing and square platform built around a small prehistoric stele. While the re-use or re-carving of menhirs for non-cult purposes is also known, in this particular instance the prehistoric monument remained a cult object, if not an object of veneration, in the Roman period.[28]

Of course, aniconic idols like menhirs can hardly have transmitted elements of iconography to Roman period representations of indigenous deities. But they do confirm the point that sacred objects of the Iron Age remained sacred in the Roman period. Unlike statues, which could be taken away, or in the case of wood, could rot into nothingness, the standing stones were relatively immovable and permanent. Examples of prehistoric standing stones that were modified in the Roman period are relatively rare, but many others could have continued to be venerated without modification or additions. The same was likely true of sacred animals and trees, for which even less evidence survives. Living trees may last a very long time, and the sacred trees of Greece noted by Pausanias are routinely connected with events in the distant mythical past.[29] Since we now know that statues of the gods also existed in the pre-Roman period, and that aniconic stones continued to be worshiped after the Roman conquest, why should the same not be true of the Iron Age statues as well?

In Chapter 4, we will see that studies of Iron Age sanctuary sites have emphasized the role of central pits and trenches filled with offerings. Between the Augustan period and the end of the first century AD, these pits were filled in and presumably replaced by cult statues. But there is no reason to suppose that the pits, archaeologically durable features, were not accompanied by less durable wooden images of the sort discussed in the previous chapter, which continued to be venerated in newer Roman dry-stone structures. The earliest cult images of the Roman period were also composed of wood, and it was in this medium that the transition from Iron Age to Roman religious art was made.

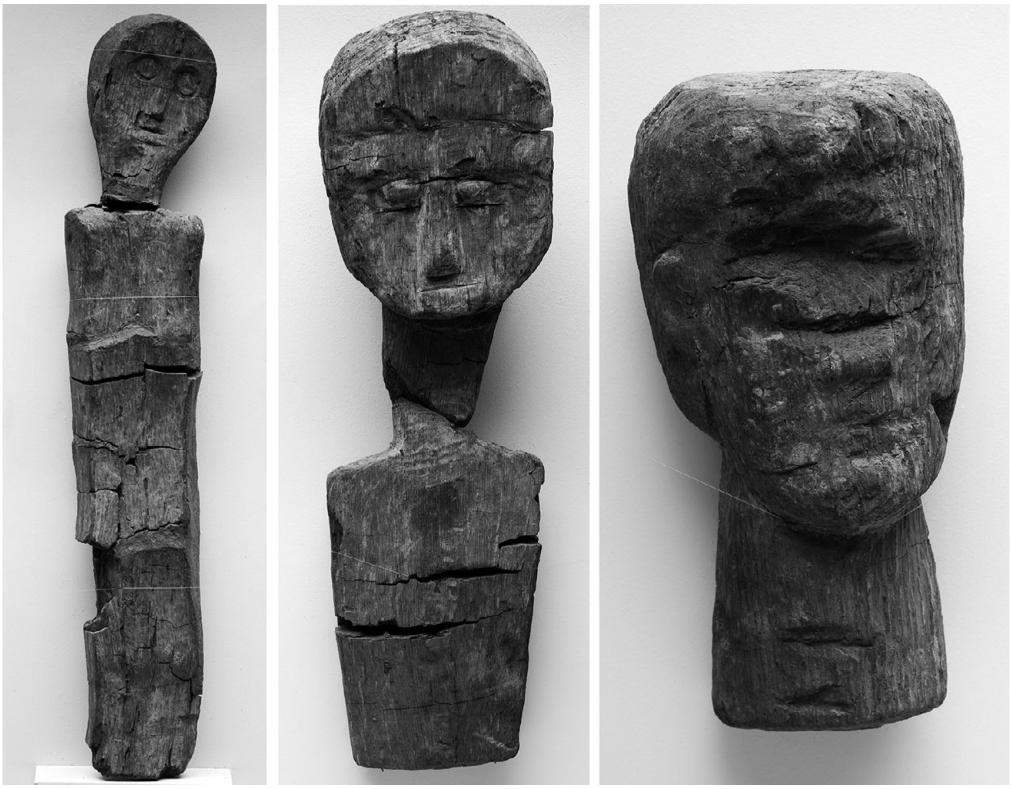
CONTINUITY AND ROMAN WOODEN SCULPTURE

Though stone would become the most popular medium for cult images in the Roman period, and is the medium that first comes to mind when we think of Roman art, wood nonetheless continued to play an important role in provincial art, especially in the first century AD. In this early period, it was natural that new wooden images of the gods should made in the same material as those of the Iron Age. The largest assemblages of Roman period wooden sculpture in Gaul and Germany come from spring sanctuary sites in Burgundy, almost all of which are votive offerings that probably represent pilgrims and devotees rather than divinities. But this is due to the chances of survival, and we do possess a small number of Roman wooden sculptures that represent divinities. Like the Iron Age wooden sculptures discussed in the last chapter, these images can only represent a tiny fraction of the original population of wooden gods and goddesses. It was via such wooden representations that the iconographic traits of the Iron Age were transmitted into the more durable and abundant stone sculptures of the second and third centuries AD.

The single largest, and most famous, assemblage of Roman wooden sculpture in Western Europe was found in the nineteenth and early twentieth century excavations at Fontes Sequanae (Source de la Seine, Côte d'Or). The natural springs at the source of the Seine River were presided over by the goddess Sequana, who offered healing water to visitors, and also generated the water-logged mud in which many wooden artefacts were preserved.[30] The wooden sculptures from Fontes Sequanae consist almost entirely of anatomical votives and representations of pilgrims. Similar representations of pilgrims are also found in stone relief carvings from the site, with both media depicting men and women who carry coins, bags of money, and pieces of fruit as gifts to Sequana. Many of the pilgrims wear a long hooded cloak, which is often identified as a traditional Gallic cloak that can be found in scenes of daily life in other art works in Gaul and Germany.[31] Despite their native appearance, the act of visiting a hot water spring as a healing sanctuary seems to have been a Roman introduction to Gaul.[32] A few of the wooden sculptures are slightly more complex than the others, such as a representation of a male reaching under his tunic to clutch his genitalia, or a female figure from the same site with her arms folded across her chest.[33] Most, however, are simple busts, or posts and planks with a rough head carved at the top, and rudimentary clothing and hair.

While the wooden sculptures from Fontes Sequanae are numerous and well known, they are not unique. Comparable assemblages of wooden sculptures and anatomical votives have been found at other Roman spring sanctuaries in Burgundy and elsewhere including Chamalières (Puy-de-Dôme), Essarois (Côte-d'Or), Luxeuil-les-Baines (*Luxovium*, Haute Saône), Montbouy (Loiret), Bourbonne-les-Bains (Haute-Marne) and at Source de la Douix (Côte-d'Or).[34]

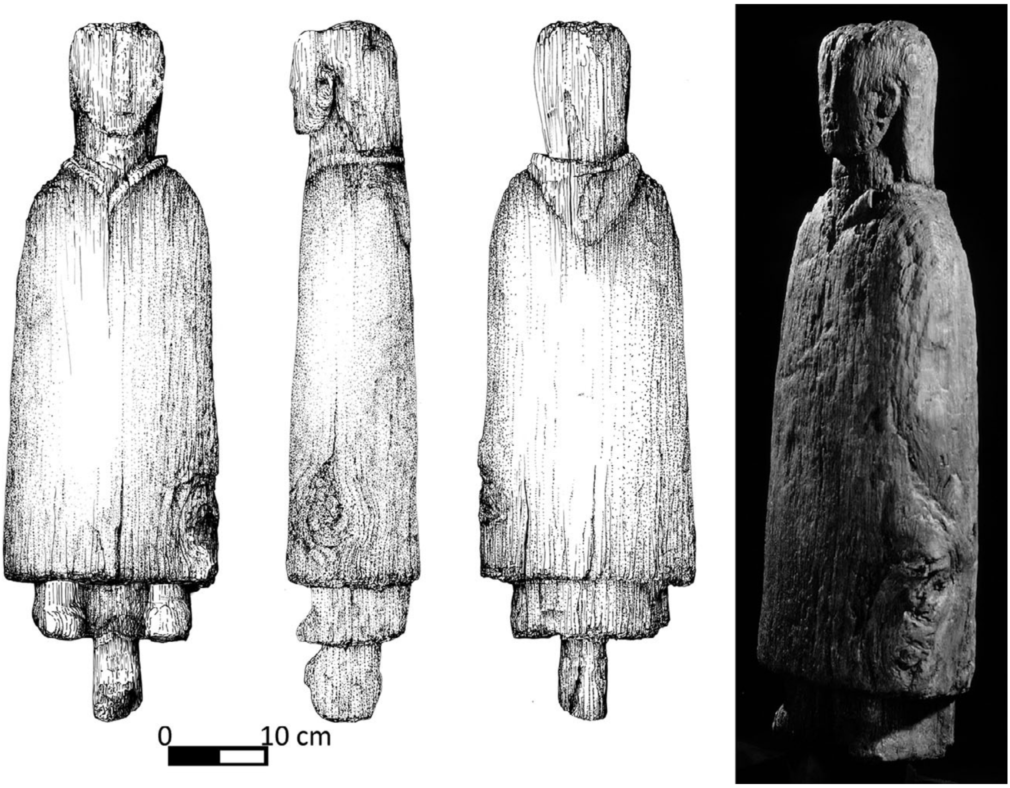
Three oak sculptures from Montbouy are a good example of the sort of images that each of these sites has produced (**Fig. 3.3**). They were found in 1860, along with numerous coins and anatomical votives, in an octagonal building that was centered around a circular pool, and was located not far from a conventional rectangular Romano-Celtic temple.[35] The body of the largest of the three sculptures is essentially a plank without limbs that sprouts a large round head, which is dominated by a large straight nose and incised



3.3 Wooden statues depicting pilgrims or divinities from Montbuoy. All are oak, H. 57.5 cm, 22 cm, and 21 cm. (Hôtel Cabu, Musée d'Histoire et d'Archéologie, Orléans. Photo: © François Lauginie)

circular eyes. The second is similar, but stops at the midriff, and has externalized bulging eyes and a long skinny neck. Both have a crude slit-like mouth. The smallest of the three appears to be a more plastic carving of a bust only, with a more naturalistic modeling of the shape of the head, as well as the ear and hair. Its face, unfortunately, is not well preserved. As with the wooden sculptures from other sites, the Montbouy sculptures recall Pliny's description of "tree-like idols" (*arborea simulacra*) of early Rome, as well as general appearance of the Iron Age wooden sculptures and *Holzidole* discussed in Chapter 2.[36]

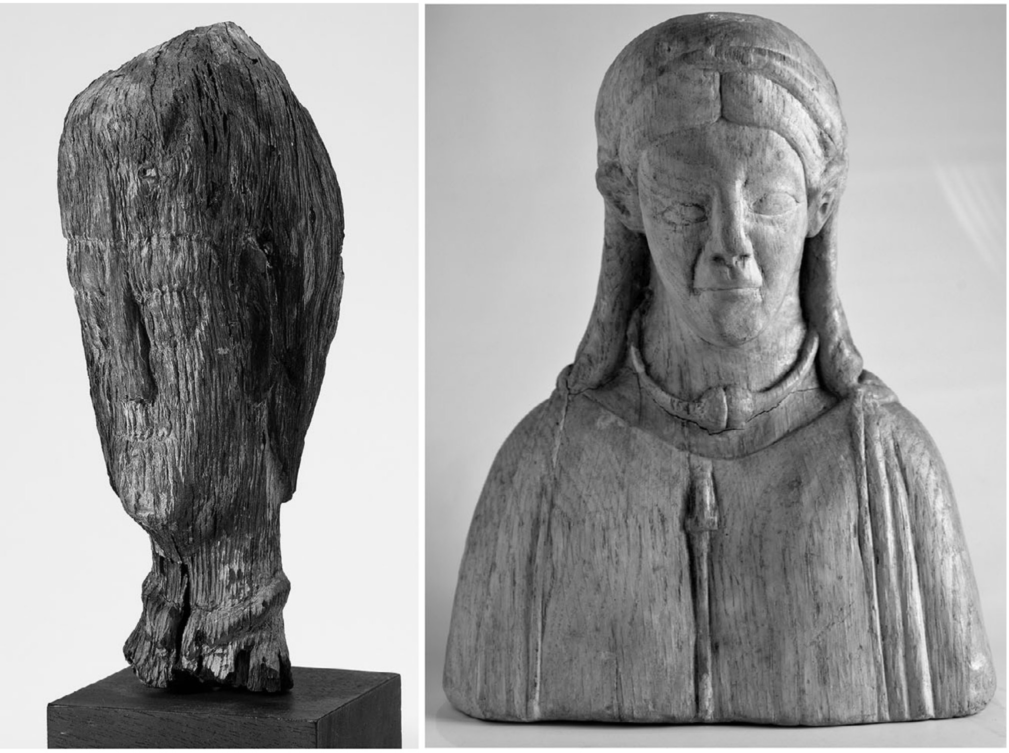
Because of their crudity, and the fact that they are made out of wood, the sculptures from these sites are often identified as late Iron Age, but radiocarbon dates for the wooden sculptures at Fontes Sequanae put most of them in the first century AD and later, a range that is supported by associated coins and other artefacts.[37] Radiocarbon or dendrochronological dates for other Roman period wooden sculptures are seldom available, and dating the sculptures on the basis of comparisons to stone sculptures is almost impossible given the inherent differences between the two media and the problems of provincial style.[38]



3.4 Wooden image of a pilgrim from Eschenz (Switzerland). H. 69 cm. (Amt für Archäologie, Kanton Thurgau, www.archaeologie.tg.ch)

The very basic problems of dating Roman wooden sculptures are illustrated by an oak carving found in a rescue excavation in Eschenz (Roman *Tasgetium*, Switzerland) in 1977 (**Fig. 3.4**). The sculpture has been routinely identified as another pilgrim on the basis of its similarity to the sculptures from Burgundy. The beardless male (?) figure has shoulder-length hair, and wears the same long hooded-cloak. Its rather poorly preserved face is dominated by a large straight nose. At the base of the statue, a wooden peg allowed it to be inserted into a base. It was found in a wooden drain of the Roman vicus, which could be dated by dendrochronology to AD 56, and alongside ceramics of the first century AD, and thus until recently it was believed to have been carved in the 60s AD. In 2007, however, the tree-rings of the sculpture's wood were examined using a new non-destructive 3D X-ray computer tomography technique, and a fell date of 10 or 9 B.C was obtained. This makes the Eschenz sculpture one of the earliest firmly dated wooden sculptures of Rome's western provinces, and suggests it was in-use for about 70 years.[39]

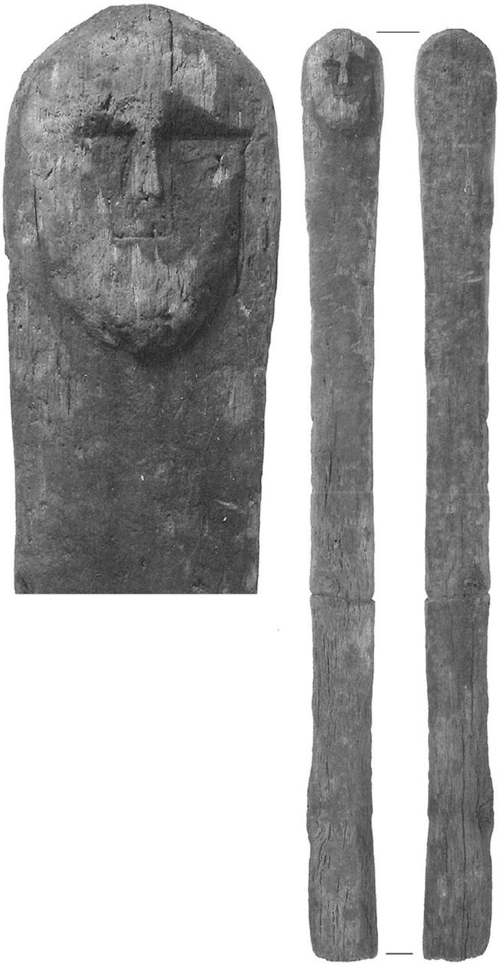
Even more problematic than their dating is the question of the identity of the wooden figures. A particularly well-preserved female bust wearing



3.5 Wooden busts with torcs. Gods or pilgrims? Left: Luxeuil-les-Bains, H. 18.4 cm. Right: Chamalières, H. 40 cm. (Left: Photo: © Musée des beaux-arts et d'archéologie de Besançon – photo P. GUENAT). Right: Musée Bargoin, Clermont Auvergne Métropole © Rémi Boissau, Ville de Clermont-Ferrand)

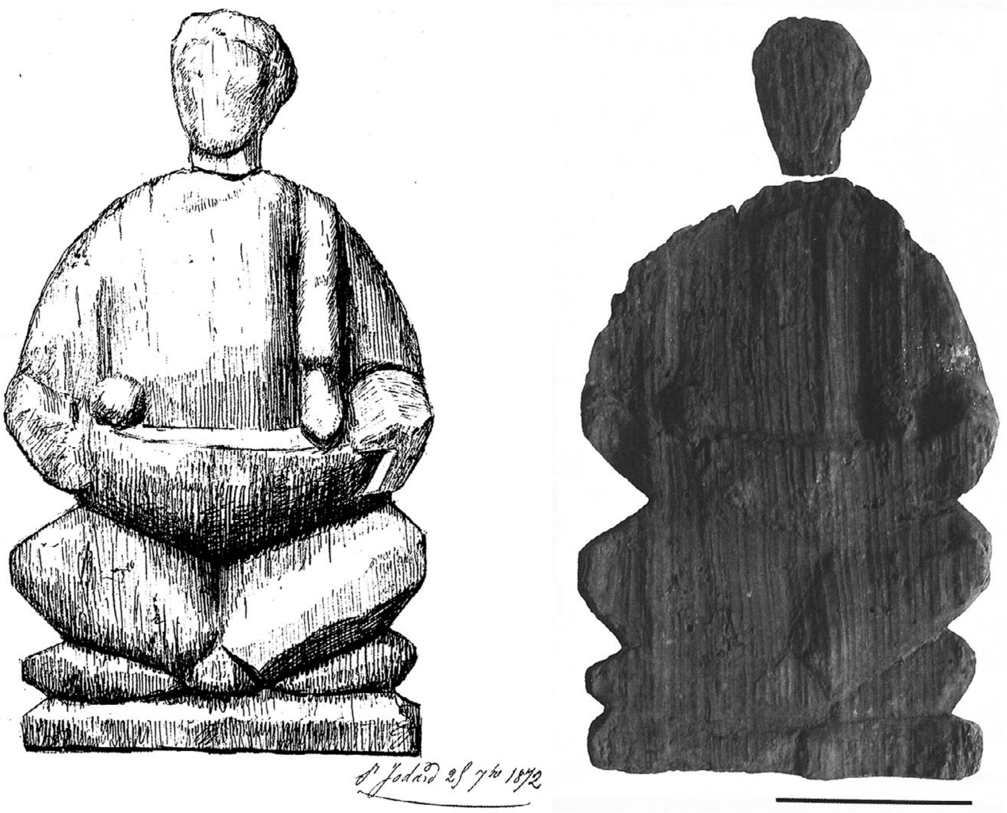
a buffer-ended torc from Chamalières is often identified as a goddess or a priestess (**Fig. 3.5, right**), and is quite similar to the first century BC sculpture from Yverdon-les-Bains (Vaud, Switzerland, **Fig. 2.22, right**). A very badly preserved bust from Luxeuil-les-Bains also wears the same type of torc (**Fig. 3.5, left**), but has much cruder facial features. As discussed in the last chapter, torcs can be interpreted either as a sign of high status in mortal society, or as the attributes of a divinity.[40] Conversely, a wooden bust from Bourbonne-les-Bains with no torc has been described as a representation of Damona, the goddess of the site's spring, but it is very similar to other busts interpreted as pilgrims at other sites.[41] Whether the sculptures are meant to represent elite members of early Roman Gallic society who had visited a sanctuary, or the divinities themselves, often remains uncertain. What is clear is that a strong tradition of figural wooden votive sculpture existed very early in the Roman imperial period.

An oak sculpture found at Oedenburg (Haut-Rhin) (**Fig. 3.6**) in the 1999–2005 excavations of the site has more in common with the *Holzidole* of the Iron Age than with the cruder representations of pilgrims at Roman spring sanctuaries – it is larger, and bears a very schematic carving of a face – but has been firmly dated by dendrochronology to AD 35. The Oedenburg figure was found in a secondary context, re-used in the walls of a water basin along with other wooden beams for which the latest dendrochronological dates lie between AD 55 and 65. Before this re-use, it seems likely it was displayed for twenty or thirty years in or near a Romano-Celtic temple located just to the south of the basin. The lack of a base or other indications of mounting or attachment suggest that it was simply planted into the ground.[42] Its re-use in such a profane manner, only two or three decades after its creation, implies that it was another pilgrim image, votive offering, or perhaps even an architectural element, rather than an idol, but we cannot be certain.


3.6 Wooden post-like figure from Oedenburg. Oak, H. 1.2 m. (After Reddé 2011, fig. 3.68)

A least so far as we can tell, the wooden sculptures discussed so far have little in common with later Romano-Celtic religious iconography, but like Iron Age wooden sculptures, there may have been other organic attributes and detachable elements that are now lost. Alongside the more common wooden votive sculptures, five Roman period wooden statues have survived that can be recognized as representations of divinities. These sculptures can be seen as representative of an intermediary step toward the stone depictions of native divinities that became more common in the second and third centuries AD. In all five cases, the wooden sculptures were found at the bottom of pits or disused wells, a factor that ultimately resulted in their preservation in water-logged or anaerobic conditions. The intentional deposition of religious sculpture in this manner and its significance will be revisited in Chapter 6.

The first is a small statuette that was found in the 1872 at excavations of the Celtic oppidum of Crêt-Châtelard (Loire), and is perhaps the most important of the wooden statues to be discussed here since it also provides a direct link to



3.7 The seated god from Crêt-Châtelard. H. 20 cm. Left, drawing following its initial discovery in 1872. Right: photograph made after its rediscovery in 2005. The bar below the photograph represents 5 cm. (With the kind permission of LA DIANA Société historique et archéologique du Forez; after Charbonnier, Perrier, and Crozier 2006, figs. 4 and 2, drawing by Vincent Durand, 1872)

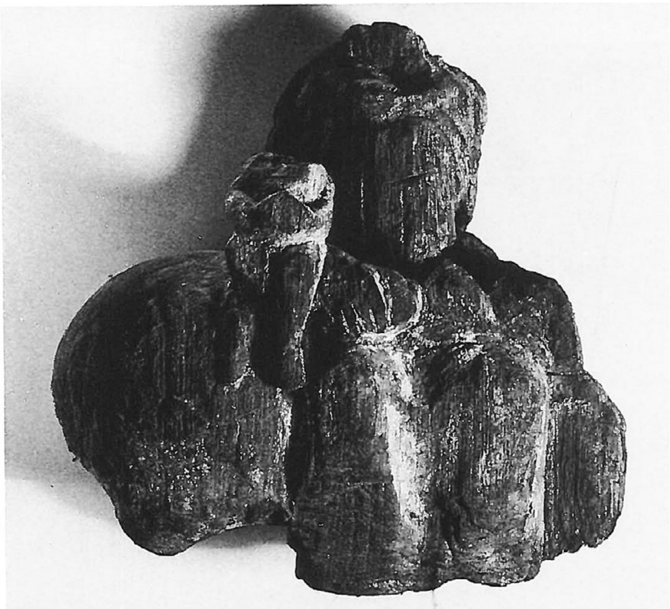
Iron Age art (**Fig. 3.7**).[43] The statuette was found at the bottom of a 3 m deep pit, and depicts a cross-legged figure seated on a low rectangular base with a bowl on its lap, on the right side of which is a circular object, perhaps a torc or a piece of fruit. A copper cauldron and a collection of deer horns found with the statuette have led to an identification as Cernunnos, a Celtic divinity who appears cross-legged in a number of later Roman reliefs that will be discussed below.

The date of the Crêt-Châtelard statuette is of immense importance to the history of Roman art in Gaul since it is comparable to the seated-warrior statues of the Iron Age (e.g. **Figs. 2.10**, **2.11**, and **2.15**), or the horned god on the Gundestrup cauldron (**Fig. 2.17**), and to later representations of seated gods from the Roman period. As of 2014, it had yet to be dated by radiocarbon or dendrochronological methods, but associated finds in the nineteenth century excavation included a large quantity of ceramics, including Arretine pottery, that suggested a late first century BC date for the filling of the pit.[44]

If the seated figure from Crêt-Châtelard is indeed late Iron Age, or even a very early Roman period sculpture, then it should be considered a sort of "missing link" between Iron Age and Roman period depictions of native divinities.

The second wooden sculpture is one of three statues that were intentionally buried in deep pits (**Fig. 6.10**) at Le Bernard (Vendée). All three of the statues from Le Bernard depict a seated mother goddesses (**Fig. 6.10**), who can be found in stone artworks throughout the Romano-Celtic world (e.g. **Fig. 3.20**). Two of the mother goddesses from Le Bernard were made of stone, but one was a large well preserved oak statue (**Fig. 6.10b**). The pits at Le Bernard were filled between the first and early third centuries AD, and, though obviously desirable, a more accurate dating of the sculptures is not possible.[45] They could have been made not long before the pits were filled, or centuries earlier.

Both the third and fourth surviving wooden statues depict the goddess Epona. A small, damaged oak statuette of the Celtic horse goddess, was found in a pit near the Roman baths at Saintes (Charente-Maritime) in the nineteenth century, and portrays her riding side-saddle on a horse, with a small basket in her right hands, a heavy cloak around her neck, and a small child holding a dog sitting next to her (**Fig. 3.8**). No scientific dating technique has been applied to the statuette, but its similarity to second and third century AD stone representations has been assumed to indicate it is contemporary to them.[46] This assumption may well be hasty as the statue could have been quite old at the time it was buried in the pit.



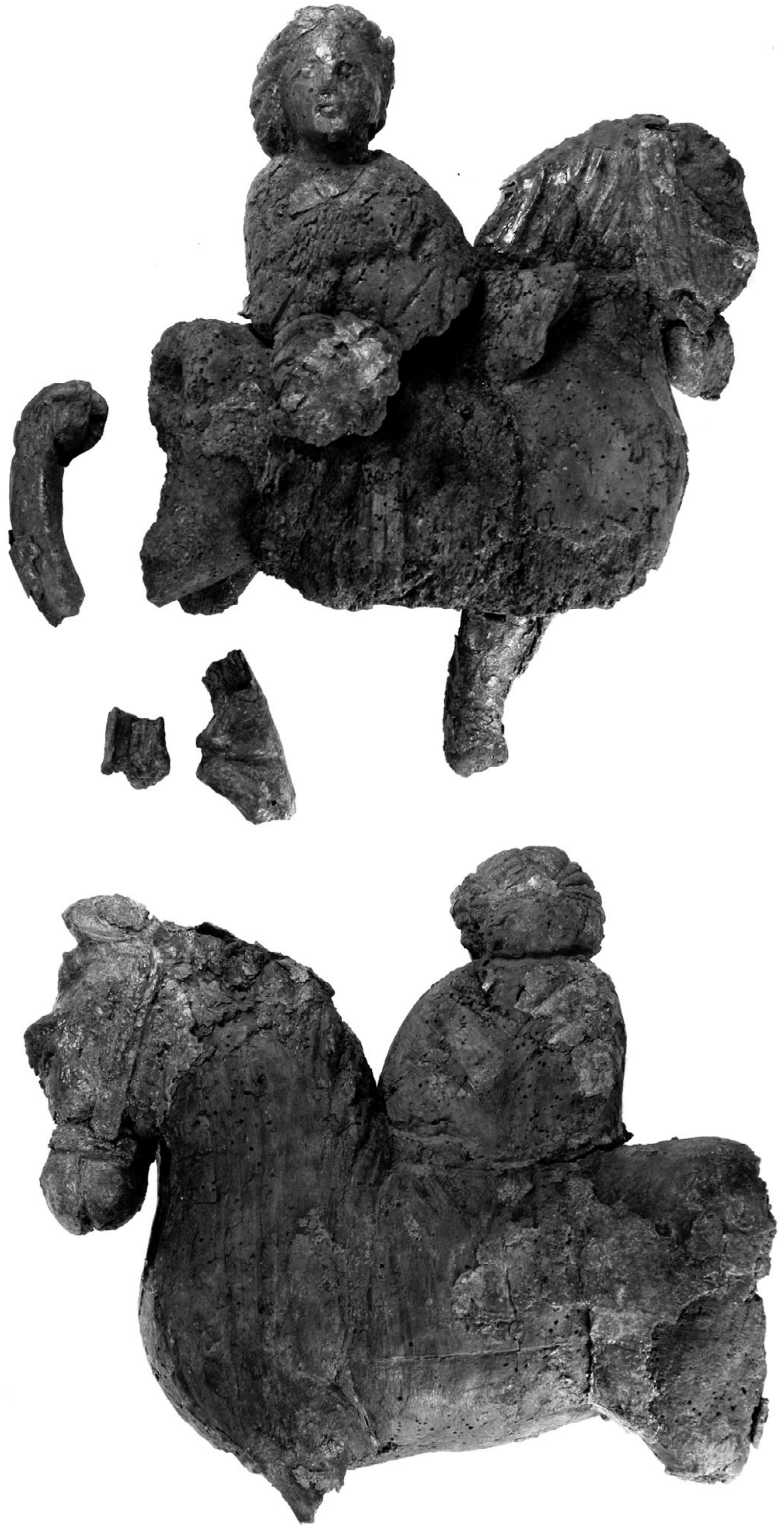
3.8 The wooden Epona from Saintes. Oak, H. 16 cm. (Musée Archéologique de Saintes)

This certainly seems to be the case with the fourth wooden statue, yet another Epona, which was found in a pit in 2008 during excavations at Saint-Valérien (Yonne). Though now in pieces, the iconography of the once 40 cm high statue is very close to that of the Epona from Saintes, with the goddess sitting side-saddle on a horse, but without the child and dog (**Fig. 3.9**). Strictly speaking, this remarkable find is not so much a wooden statue, as a wooden core (probably oak) that was originally covered with a skin of thin plates of bronze, which is now only partially preserved. Details of the clothing and hair were added by cold working with a chisel into the plates only after they had been molded around and nailed onto the wooden core. Other metal details were attached separately, including the harness of the horse, and a whip once held by the goddess that has become detached from the piece. A laboratory examination shows that the eyes of the horse consisted of small pearls of glass with thin pieces of silver imbedded in them.[47] Though we might instinctively imagine wood as a medium for cheaper and lower quality monuments, a lot of time and craftsmanship had been invested in creating this artwork.

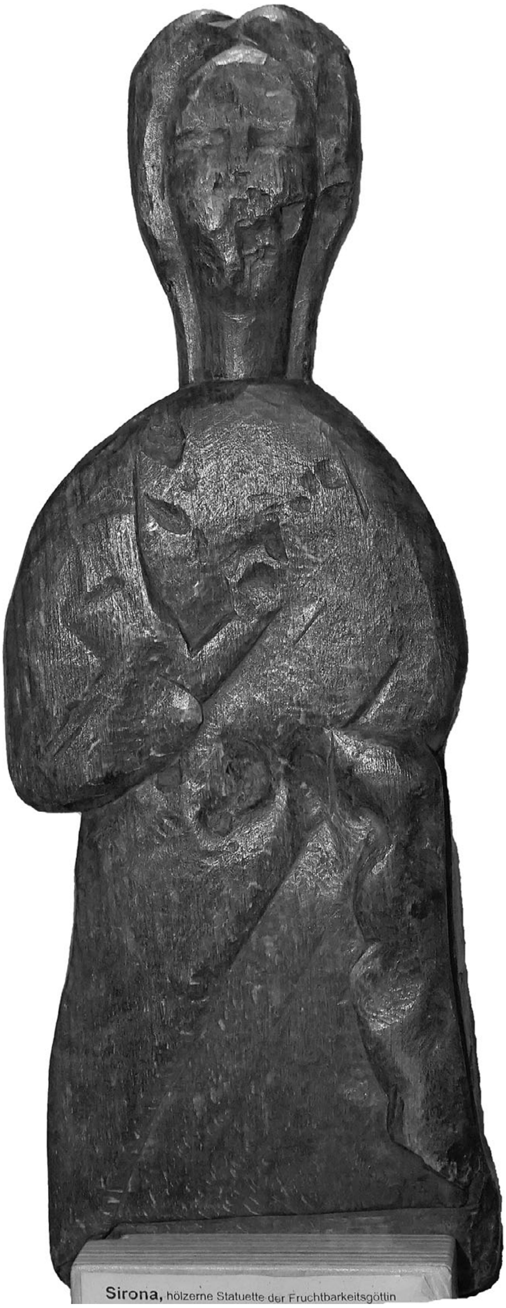
The initial publication of the Epona from Saint-Valérien classified the sensational artwork as a *sphyrélaton*, a Greek term that describes statues composed of hammered sheets of metal, sometimes attached to a wooden core, and suggested that the sculpture is an example of Greek influence in Roman provincial art.[48] Ancient *sphyrélata* are understandably rare, and are best known from the Greek archaic period, with the most famous example being a triad of divinities found in a sanctuary at Dreros on Crete, which date to the mid seventh century BC.[49] But the technique of joining metal sheets can also be found on both the Iron Age God from Bouray (**Fig. 2.15**) and the Warrior from Saint-Maur **(Fig. 2.16**), which are closer in both date and location to the newly discovered Epona, such that a Celtic craft tradition seems more a likely origin for the piece.

As for the Saint-Valérien Epona's date, the pit in which it was found was filled in the late third or early fourth century, but was located in part of the settlement that had been occupied since the early first century AD. At the time of its deposition, the wood of the statue had already been attacked by woodworm, which seems to suggest it was already of some antiquity when it was carefully buried in the pit.[50] Like the seated figure from Crêt-Châtelard, it could just as easily have belonged to the generation of images that served as models for the many surviving depictions of Epona in stone.

A Roman well excavated in Pforzheim (Roman *Portus,* Baden-Württemberg) in 1949 produced the fifth and final wooden divinity. The plank-like statuette is carved only on one side, and has a slight ledge toward the bottom that presumably allowed it to be slotted into a base, just as it has been displayed in its current museum setting (**Fig. 3.10**). It represents a heavily



3.9 The Epona from Saint-Valérien (Yonne). Oak covered with copper sheets, original height ca. 40 cm. (Éveha; Photo: C. Driard)



3.10 The Sirona of Pforzheim, beechwood, H. 34.5 cm, Th. 4.2 cm. (Archäologisches Museum Pforzheim, photo: Ewald Freiburger)

robed female (?) figure with long hair, her right arm clutched against her chest, and holding a small object between the forefinger and thumb. There is a blurred protrusion to the lower left side of the statue, just below the left hand. Emil Krüger and Klaus Kortüm both identified the object in the figure's left hand as an egg, and the protrusion below it as a snake. These are the attributes of Sirona, the Celtic consort of Apollo, whose iconography is identical to that of Mediterranean Hygeia, and who is also depicted on a stone relief from Hochscheid (**Fig. 6.5**).[51] Thus the Pforzheim Sirona is the only one of the five wooden sculptures of divinities that follows a conventionally Roman iconography.

Associated find material dates the Pforzheim Sirona between the second and third centuries AD, and it is certainly no later than the middle of the third century, when the Roman vicus at Pforzheim was abandoned. Nor is the Sirona likely to predate the late first century AD, when the settlement there was founded.[52] Unlike the Epona from Saintes, we can be relatively sure that the Pforzheim Sirona was made at the same time that many other cult images in stone were being produced in Rome's western provinces. This suggests that the widespread use of stone sculpture to represent divinities did not necessarily mark the end of the production of wooden cult images.

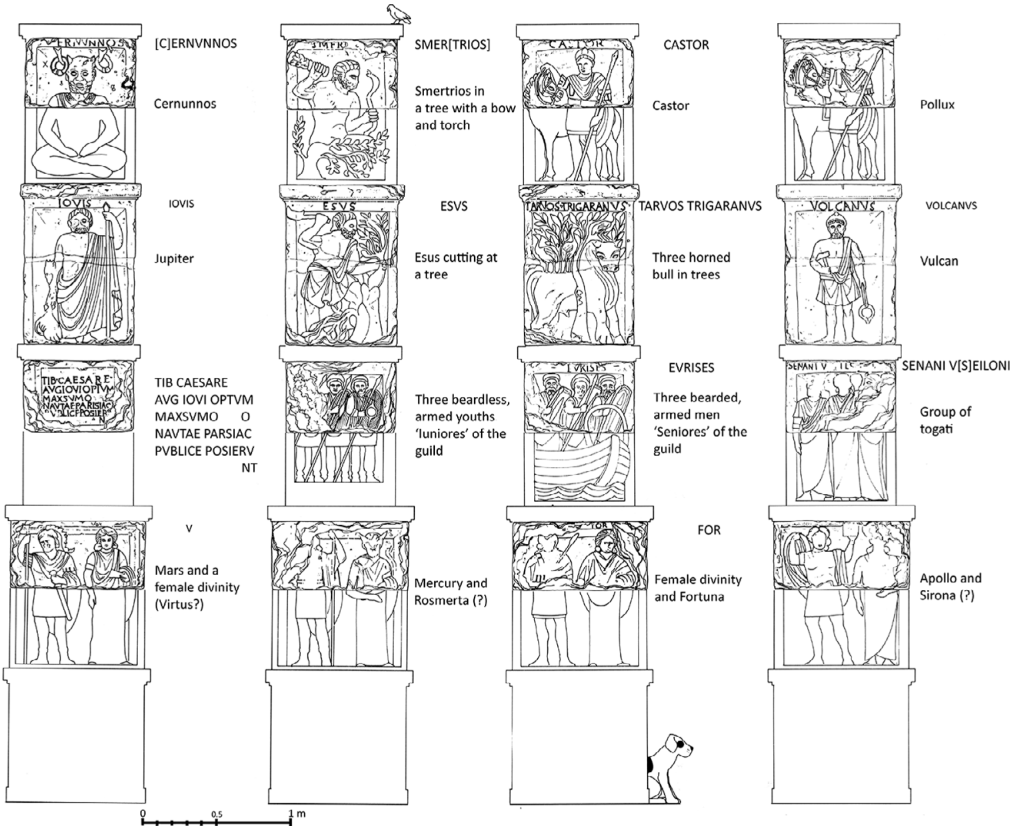
Apart from the Sirona of Pforzheim, which presumably uses classical iconography to depict a Celtic goddess, all of these Roman period wooden sculptures are representations of "native" divinities. Even the examples of uncertain dates share stylistic similarities with Iron Age wooden sculptures, and most belong to the earliest part of the imperial period. But we must be careful not to assume that all wooden sculptures are early in date. Wood would have continued to be used by poorer worshipers, and could have been preferred for special meanings it possessed as a medium. As late as 192 BC in Rome, Q. Marcius Ralla dedicated a cypress-wood statue of Veiovis in a temple on the Capitoline, while C. Sosius brought a cedar wood Apollo back from Seleucia and placed it in the temple of Apollo connected to the Theater of Marcellus in 31 BC.[53] These wooden statues were acquired long after Rome's temples were being routinely adorned with luxurious representations in marble, ivory, and metal, but were still considered worthy of attention by prominent Romans. Presumably it was either their antiquity or history rather than their material that made them attractive.

Old wooden images could also remain in use for a long time. In the previous chapter, we saw that the shelf-life of wooden cult images in Rome was very long indeed. The wooden Fortuna in the Forum Boarium and the Juno Regina on the Aventine, which were made as early as the fourth and fifth centuries BC, were still around in the first century AD. If this seems improbable, one must consider the fact that medieval and early modern wooden statues can still be found in some European Christian churches today. There is no reason to suppose that wooden idols made in the Iron Age did not continue to be worshiped long after the arrival of the Romans. This fact alone may have contributed somewhat to the lag in the production of stone and metal cult images in Gaul and Germany.

NATIVE AND COMBINED ICONOGRAPHY

Having now seen the evidence for the continued use of Iron Age cult images in the Roman period, and having noted the existence of wooden cult images in Rome's western provinces, we may now turn to later Roman representations of the gods that seem to be either native in origin, or that combine conventional Roman and Iron Age iconography. Stone images of native divinities can appear in conjunction with images of classical gods and goddesses, and even appear together on the same monuments, including those that were created as part of the Roman ritual of the vow. Native gods appear in relief carvings on the sides of Roman style altars, and on freestanding stelae, and as statues, but we also find them on monument types that were peculiar to the Romano-Celtic world, which were presumably based on native ideas and monument forms. These include a group of square pillars composed of multiple tiers, and a large number of columnar monuments known as the Jupiter columns.

One of the earliest datable religious monuments in Gaul, the Pillar of the Sailors (*pilier des nautes*), was erected in the reign of Tiberius (AD 14–37) and is just such a non-Roman monument type with its relief depictions of both

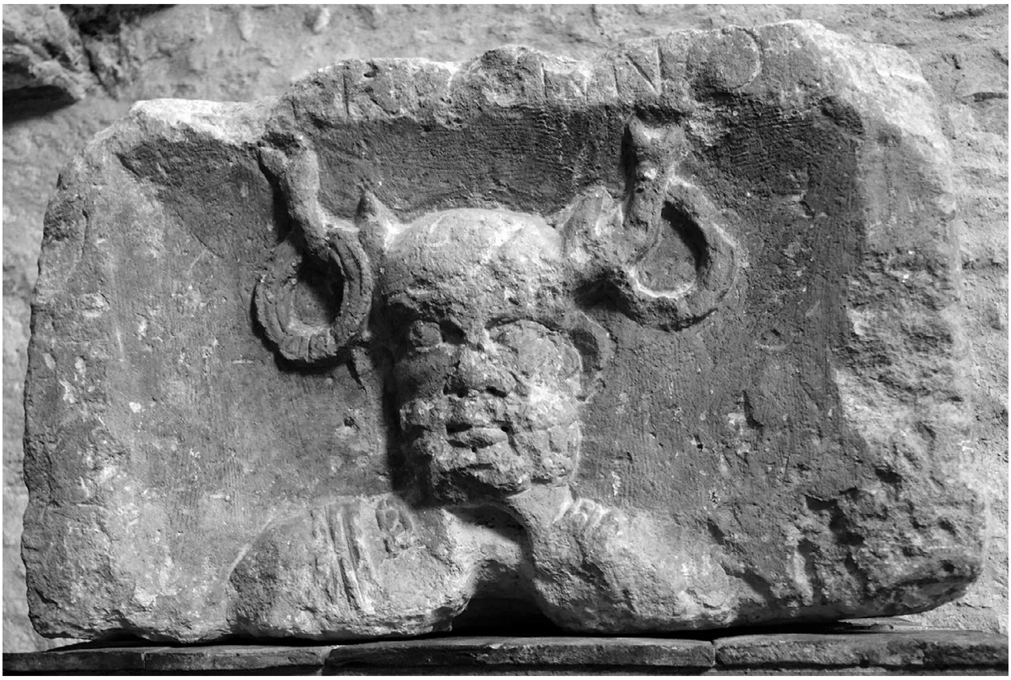

[C]ERNVNNOS
Cernunnos
IOVIS
Jupiter
TIB CAESARE
AVG IOVI OPTVM
MAXSVMO O
NAVTAE PARSIAC
PVBLICE POSIERV
NT
V
Mars and a female divinity (Virtus?)
SMER[TRIOS]
Smertrios in a tree with a bow and torch
ESVS
Esus cutting at a tree
Three beardless, armed youths 'Iuniores' of the guild
Mercury and Rosmerta (?)
CASTOR
Castor
TARVOS TRIGARANVS
Three horned bull in trees
EVRISES
Three bearded, armed men 'Seniores' of the guild
FOR
Female divinity and Fortuna
Pollux
VOLCANVS
Vulcan
SENANI V[S]EILONI
Group of togati
Apollo and Sirona (?)
0
0.5
1 m

3.11 The Pillar of the Sailors, Paris. Limestone. The most complete block is 1.08 m high, and the monument's original height, with the postulated lower tier, is estimated to have been around 5.24 m without the statue at the top. (Adapted from Adam 1984 figs. 185 and 186, illustration by J.-P. Adams)

native and Roman divinities (**Fig. 3.11**).[54] It was discovered in 1710, disarticulated in six blocks that had been re-used in the choir of Notre-Dame cathedral in Paris. In antiquity, it stood as a rectangular pillar of four tiers, and likely supported a statue of Jupiter at its summit. This last detail is supported by the dedicatory inscription on one of the faces on the second tier: *Tib(erio) Caesare / Aug(usto) Ioui Optum[o] / Maxsumo / nautae Parisiaci / publice posierunt* – "To Tiberius Augustus and Jupiter Optimus Maximus, from the Sailors of Paris, from their communal funds." The Sailors of Paris (*Nautae Parisiaci*) must have been a collegium, a guild or corporation (a very Roman social structure), which had financed the monument.[55]

Though many are in poor condition, some of the relief panels of the Pillar of the Sailors include inscriptions on the borders of the sculpted faces that identify the divinities represented. The lowest tier, for which the edge of the block with the inscriptions is missing, consists of pairs of divinities: Mars and a female divinity, Mercury and Rosmerta (?), Fortuna and a female divinity, Apollo and a female divinity, possibly Sirona. The second tier includes the inscribed dedication, and three faces showing junior and senior members of the guild of sailors, armed with shields and spears in two panels, and dressed in togas in another. The third and fourth tiers show individual Gallic and Roman divinities. On tier three, Jupiter stands holding a spear, the bearded god Esus hacks at a tree with an axe, a three-horned bull stands amid trees, and Vulcan is represented with his hammer and tongs. The uppermost block has been cut in half, and the lower half lost, but on one side it depicts Cernunnos, probably seated cross-legged with a horned head from which torcs hang (**Fig. 3.12**), Smertrios in a tree with a torch and bow, and Castor and Pollux with their horses. In sum, the viewer was presented with a mixture of divinities depicted using more or less conventional Roman iconography (Castor and Pollux, Vulcan, Jupiter), and "native" gods (Esus, Cernunnos, Smertrios, and the three-horned bull) who had an iconography of their own.

No monuments comparable to the Pillar of the sailors can be found in Rome or Italy, but at least three similar monuments are known in Gaul and Germany. Blocks from what must have been similar monuments have been found at Mavilly (Côte-d'Or) and at Nijmegen, where a dedicatory inscription also dates the monument to the reign of Tiberius.[56] But the iconography of the divinities on both the Nijmegen and Mavilly pillars is purely classical in form, if carved in provincial style. The fragments from a fourth pillar, and the



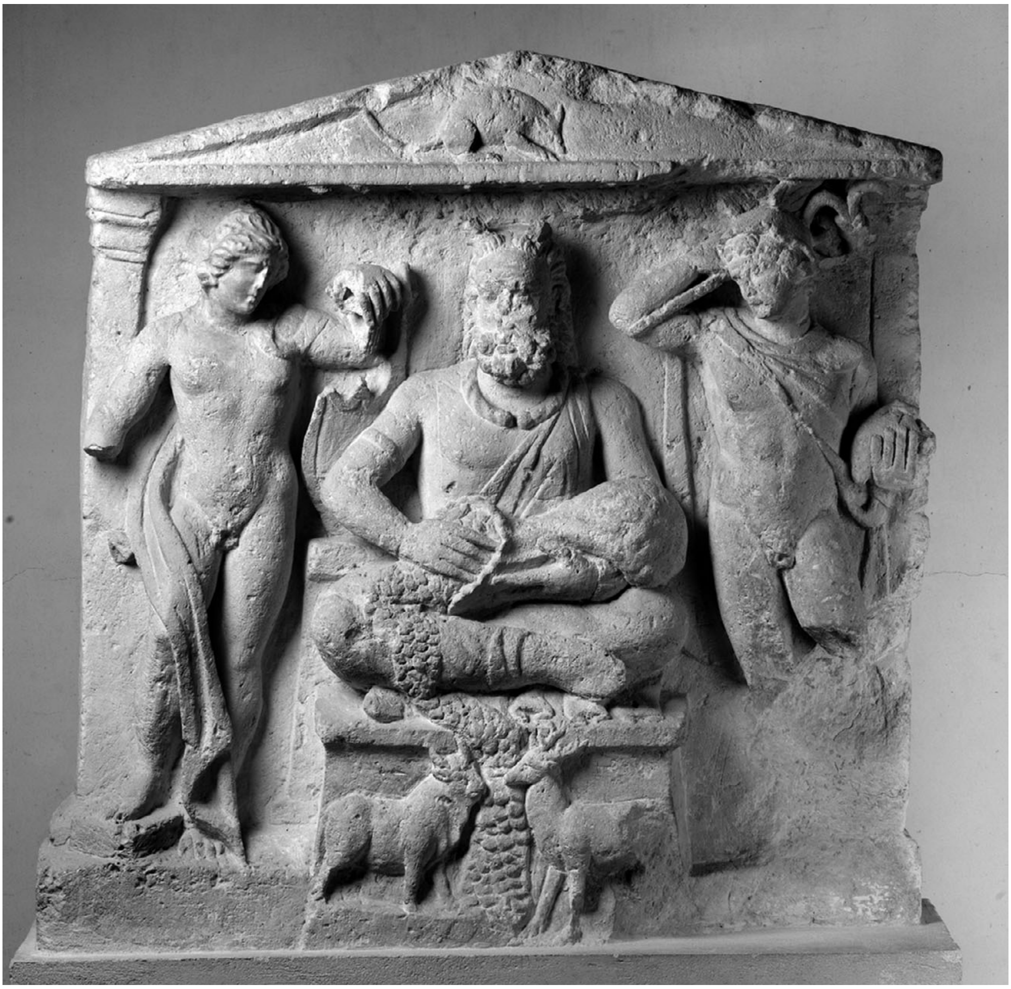
3.12 The god Cernunnos on the Pillar of the Sailors. Limestone, H. 47 cm. (Thermes de Cluny, Paris. Photo by the author) foundation on which it stood, were recently unearthed at the Romano-Celtic temple complex at Jouars-Ponchartrain (Yvellines), which provides the only example of these pillared monuments in its original context. Coins and other votive offerings clustered around the pillar's foundation, and its placement in the middle of a walled enclosure, suggest that the monument was a focal point for ritual activity.[57]

Fragmentary and damaged as they are, the relief panels of the Pillar of the Sailors are some of the earliest datable images of native divinities in Roman Gaul. The use of inscriptions to identify the figures in the reliefs suggests that they were intended for both Roman and Gallic viewers who spoke a mixture of Latin and Celtic, and were not necessarily familiar with all of the subjects. Thus less than a century after the Roman conquest of Gaul, Celtic gods were represented in anthropomorphic form alongside conventional Roman divinities on the same monument. If the iconography of the native divinities had been invented, then it was a very fast process. It is far more probable that the carvers of the Pillar of the Sailors had Iron Age prototypes available on which their anthropomorphic representations of the native gods were based.

Cernunnos and Other Cross-Legged Divinities

At least one of the native gods on the Pillar of the Sailors can be traced directly to a pre-Roman prototype. The figure identified by the inscription as Cernunnos (**Fig. 3.12**), is only one of about twenty-five reliefs and bronze statuettes from Gaul and Germany that depict a horned and torc-wearing figure, often seated cross-legged and accompanied by stags and deer, and other symbols of wealth and fertility, such as torcs, cornucopiae, fruit-filled baskets, and bags of coins.[58] Most of these images belong to the second or third century AD, and the name "Cernunnos" appears exclusively on the Pillar of the Sailors.[59] The name means "horned one" or something very similar in Celtic. There can be little doubt that this is the very same divinity who appears on one of the panels of the Gundestrup cauldron (**Fig. 2.17**), and who shares the same cross-legged posture found in many Iron Age sculptures. These Roman period representations thus demonstrate a direct link to Iron Age iconography and religious art.

The most famous representation of Cernunnos from the Roman period is a large relief that was found in the vicinity of Reims (Marne) in 1837 (**Fig. 3.13**), and which is usually dated to the Antonine period for purely stylistic reasons. The relief depicts a large bearded figure sitting cross-legged on a rectangular base, wearing a torc and an armring, clothed in trousers, and with a cloak slung over his left shoulder. The horns or antlers of the god were carefully chipped off in a later period, but are still visible as rough irregularities in the background of the relief. The god holds a bag of coins (or possibly grain) on his lap, the



3.13 The Reims Cernunnos. The horns of the divinity have been carefully chipped off. Apollo appears to be stepping off his statue base. Limestone, H. 125 cm, W. 110 cm, Th. 41 cm. (Musée Saint-Rémi, Reims, Inv. No. 978.20189)

contents of which are flowing out onto ground, with the cascade being examined by a small bull and a stag in the foreground. On either side of Cernunnos stand Apollo, with his lyre resting on an altar, and Mercury, with a caduceus and money bag, both purely conventional Roman depictions, but in an apparently subordinate position to the Celtic god.

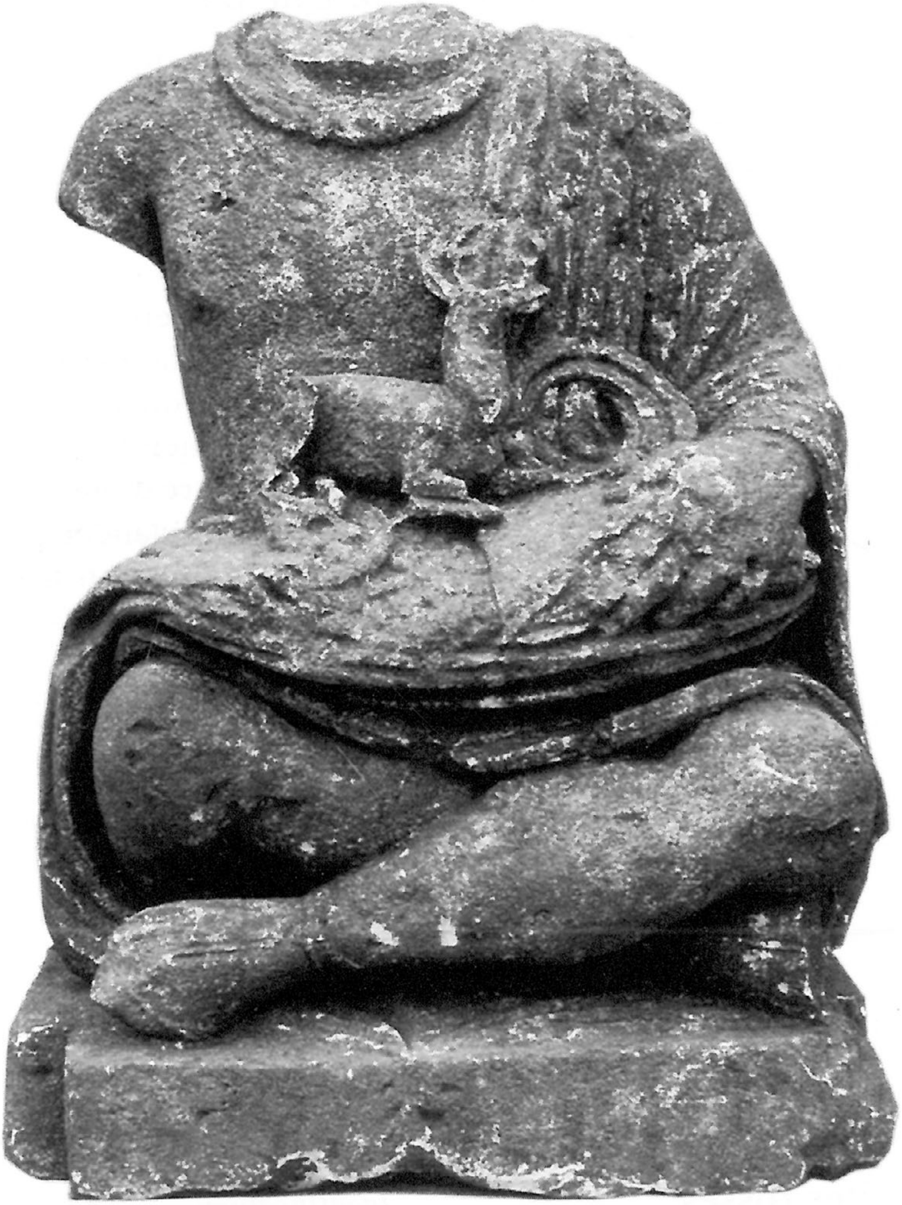
The entire scene of the Reims relief is enclosed by an architectural frame consisting of two pilasters supporting a pediment in which a rat is carved. The lower half of Mercury is broken away, but Apollo's right foot rests on a small base, and his lyre rests on a pedestal, his left foot is stepping off the base, almost as if the statue has come alive in a moment of epiphany. Because of its large size, high quality, and state of preservation, the relief has sometimes been identified as the idol of a temple, but given that it seems to depict statues inside a temple, it is far more likely that the relief was a votive offering.[60] Whatever its status, the Reims relief is stylistically a very Roman monument centered on an iconographically native divinity who sits between two utterly conventional Roman gods.

Other Roman period representations of the god identified as Cernunnos were carved in the round. Though now headless, a recently discovered statue from a pit near a polygonal Romano-Celtic temple in Verteuil (Charente) is a good example (**Fig. 3.14**). The limestone figure is remarkably like the relief from Reims, and holds a small stag, torc, and bag of coins in its lap. These attributes, especially the stag, confirm the identification of Cernunnos, even if the horned head is missing. The statue has been dated to the first century AD, perhaps simply because it is a "native" type, but it must have entered the pit in which it was found before the second half of the second century.[61] It is tempting to imagine the Verteuil Cernunnos as being the very sort of idol that is represented in the Reims relief.

The cross-legged position of Cernunnos, which we have already seen repeatedly in Iron Age sculpture, can be found in several Roman period sculptures that do not necessarily represent the horned god. These include five limestone statues from *Argentomagus* (Saint-Marcel, Indre).[62] One of them was found *in situ* in the basement of a Roman house, and depicts a fully clothed male, clean shaven and with short hair, but also wearing torc and holding a snake in his lap. It was located next to another, almost identical figure that lacks the snake and is sitting in a chair. The context suggests a late second or early third century date of deposition.[63] The domestic setting of the figures recalls the *buste-socles* of Paule, though their placement in the cellar may be secondary.

Two more cross-legged statues from Argentomagus were chance finds with no real context, but two others were found in temples in the settlement. The largest (H. 52 cm), from temple 1, is badly damaged, cut off at mid-riff, and broken into four pieces. It sits on a base with a very fragmentary inscription, which is nonetheless sufficient to put the sculpture firmly in the imperial period.[64] The final example, from temple 3, is much smaller than the other figures (H. 17.5 cm), and was found in a first century AD destruction context (**Fig. 3.15**). It holds a circular bowl or dish in its lap and wears a large torc and two armrings just above each elbow. Its size and the placement of the bowl on the figure's lap are reminiscent of the wooden cross-legged figure from Crêt-Châtelard (**Fig. 3.7**).

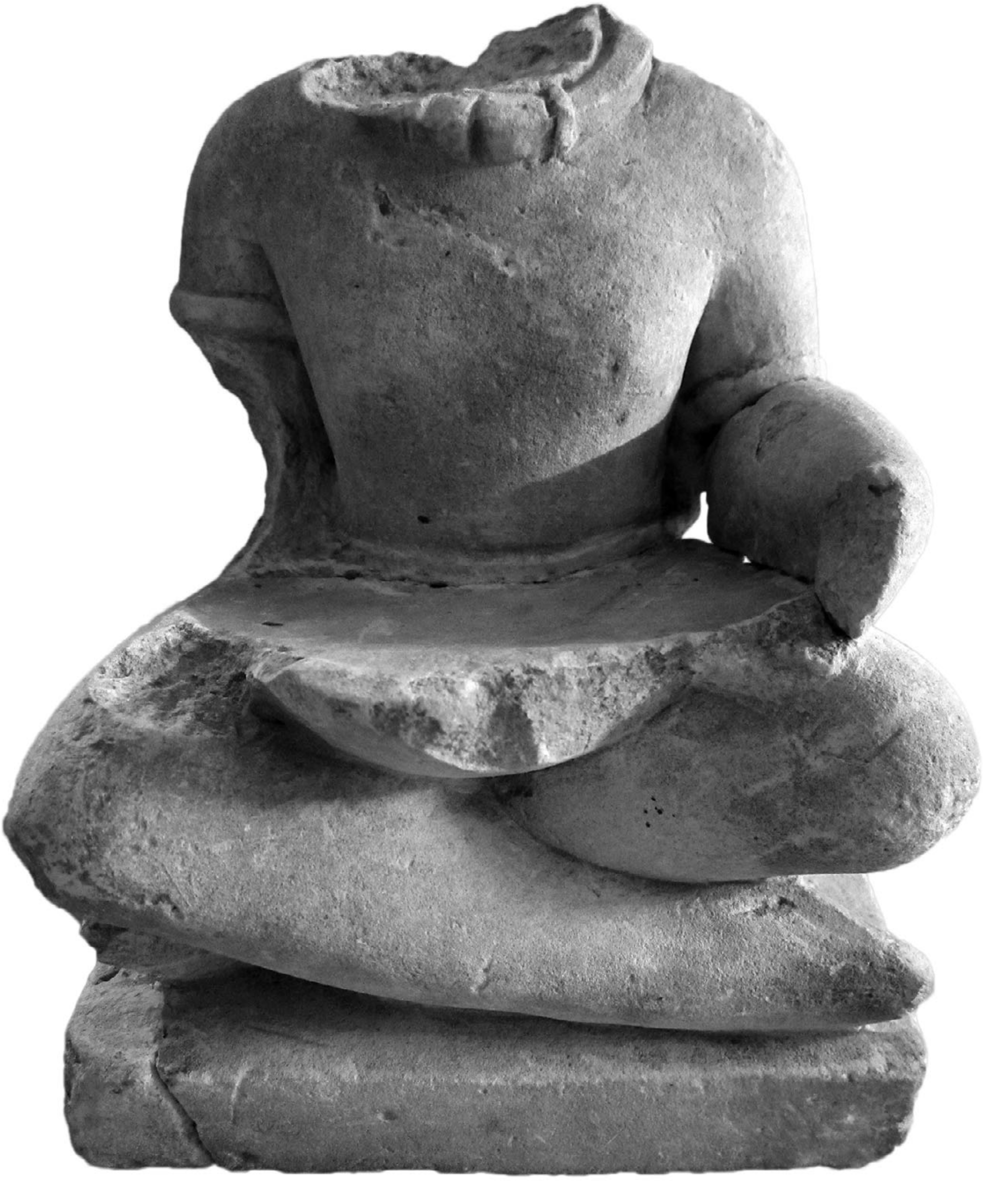
The back of the neck of the figure is protected by the same sort of composite armor found on the Iron Age statues of southern France and the Glauberg, providing a strong link to Iron Age art.[65] Like Iron Age sculptures, the smooth surface of the sculpture suggests that the artist relied on paint for added detail. Whoever carved this piece was surely familiar with the cross-legged warriors of



3.14 The cross-legged god from Verteuil. Oolitic limestone, H. 71.5 cm. (Musée d'Angoulême, photo: C. Vernou)

the Iron Age, and we should perhaps not even exclude the possibility that this last example from Argentomagus was an Iron Age sculpture that was re-used in a Roman context.

The representations of Cernunnos and other cross-legged figures of the Roman period share a clear iconographic link with the Iron Age past. The fact



3.15 The cross-legged god from Argentomagus, temple 3. Limestone, H. 17.5 cm. (Photograph by Ph. Riffaud-Longuespé, Musée d'Argentomagus)

that some have been found in Roman temples, and that others bear dedicatory inscriptions, is further support for the thesis advanced in the previous chapter that the cross-legged warriors of the Iron Age represented something, or developed into something, more meaningful than grave markers or representations of deceased individuals. They were depictions of divinities, or at least divinized heroes, displayed in temple settings, if indeed they were not the actual objects (idols) of regular and sustained worship.

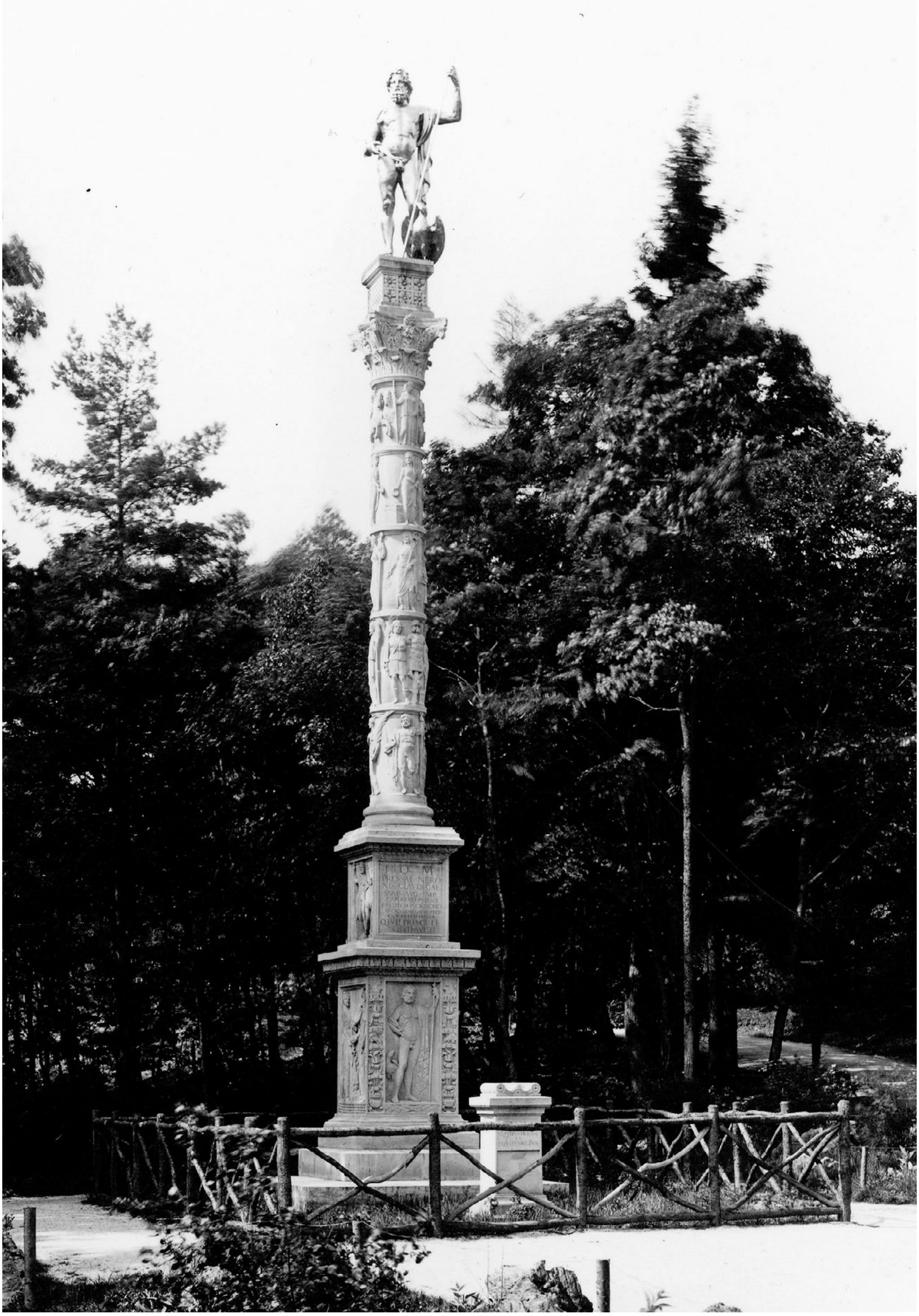
The Jupiter Columns (Jupiter-Giant Columns)

The format of the pillars from Mavilly, Nijmegen, Paris, and Jouars-Ponchartrain, as well as the Menhir of Kernuz, is broadly similar to the monuments known as Jupiter columns, which are very common in eastern Gaul and the Rhineland, and, as their name suggests, that support a representation of Jupiter. In older literature they are routinely referred to as Jupiter-Giant columns (German: *Jupitergigantensäulen)*, because many of them bore a statue of Jupiter defeating a giant, though the same monuments depicted Jupiter in other ways as well. Like the pillars, the Jupiter columns are a peculiar provincial monument that incorporate a quadratic base with reliefs representing divinities, ultimately supporting a representations of Jupiter at their summits in various poses. That the columns served an active role in worship and ritual can hardly be doubted, since they were always accompanied by altars.[66]

The round Jupiter columns are much more common than the stacked square pillars, and many hundreds of them survive, both complete and in fragments. Most of the Jupiter columns are much later in date, with the majority of datable examples ranging between AD 170 and 240. Jupiter columns have been found in temple enclosures, but also inside towns, vici, and villas. Many were deposited in wells and pits in late antiquity, while others were re-used in late Antique walls and structures, and so have been preserved largely intact, albeit divided into their component pieces.[67] The columns and their variations are too numerous to be considered in detail here, so I present only the most famous example, from Mainz, and the most recently unearthed complete column, which was found in Heidelberg in 2007.

The earliest and the largest of these monuments, standing some 12.5 m high when complete, was found during construction work in Mainz (*Mogontiacum*) in 1904, and was promptly excavated and reconstructed (**Fig. 3.16**).[68] Intentionally broken into more than 2,000 pieces, the monument had been buried in the early civilian settlement at Mainz, just north of the legionary fortress. Its lower portion consists of a square base, which has reliefs on each of its four sides that depict: Jupiter alone, Fortuna and Minerva, Hercules alone, and Mercury and Salus. A small inscription on the base names the monument's sculptors as Samus and Severus.[69] A square intermediary stone between the shaft and the base has a Dioscurus on two of its sides, Apollo Citharoedus on a third, and the dedicatory inscription on the fourth:

> *I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / pro [sa]l[ute] [Nero/nis] Clau[d]i Cae/saris Au [g(usti)] Imp(eratoris) / canaba[ri] pub[l]ice / P(ublio) Sulpicio Scribonio / Proculo le[g(ato)] Aug(usti) pr(o) [p]r(aetore) / cura et impensa / Q(uinti) Iuli Prisci et / Q(uinti) Iuli Aucti.*
>
> To Jupiter Optimus Maximus, for the safety of the emperor Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus, the Canabarii (the inhabitants of the civilian



3.16 Reconstruction of the Neronian Jupiter column of Mainz dedicated by Q. Julius Priscus and Q. Julius Auctus, signed by Samus and Severus. The copy was erected in the early twentieth century at the Saalburg in Hessen. Sandstone, H. 12.5 m. (Archiv Römerkastell Saalburg)

> settlement at Mainz) officially [dedicated this monument] when Publius Sulpicius Scribonius was governor. The undertaking and costs were provided for by Quintus Julius Priscus and Quintus Julius Auctus.

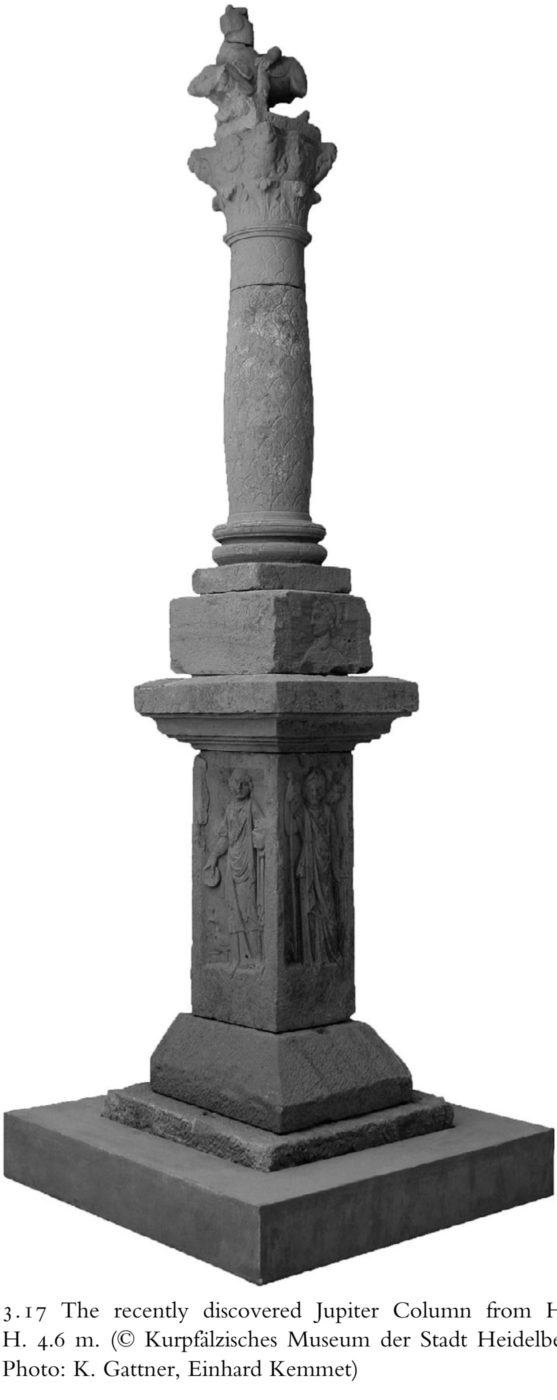
The dedication to Jupiter Optimus Maximus is repeated along with the names of the two sponsors on a free-standing altar that was found with the other pieces of the monument.[70] Since Publius Sulpicius Scribonius held the office of governor from AD 59 to 67, and it is possible that the *pro salute* part of the inscription refers to Nero's survival of the Pisonian conspiracy of AD 65.[71]

The column shaft is divided into five registers, each containing four divinities carved in relief, a compositional form that recalls the stacked square columns like the Pillar of the Sailors. Though not all of the gods and goddesses can be identified with confidence, all of the divinities appear to be entirely Roman in their iconography. An ornate composite capital supports another square socle, to which a larger-than-life sized statue of a standing Jupiter in gold-plated bronze was attached; of this statue, only pieces of a left foot, drapery, a finger, the lightning bolt, and the claw of the eagle were recovered.[72] Though there are several differences between the column in Mainz and the later second and third century Jupiter columns, it is nonetheless routinely described as the prototype for the later smaller-scale versions to which we may now turn.

The bulk of the Jupiter columns date to the second and third centuries AD, and though all are much smaller than the column in Mainz, they follow such a similar pattern that they must be related, sharing as they do the same curious compilation of Roman and Celtic ideas in both their form and in the sculptural images they incorporate. An example found in a well at Heidelberg-Neuenheim in 2007 serves as a good example of a typical Jupiter column (**Fig. 3.17**).[73] In Chapter 6, we will encounter another complete Jupiter column that was found not far away at Ladenburg (**Fig. 6.1**), which is of interest for the circumstances surrounding its deposition.

When reconstructed, the sandstone monument from Heidelberg-Neuenheim stood between 4.3 to 4.6 m in height. Its rectangular base, commonly referred to in European archaeological literature as a *Viergötterstein* ("four-gods stone"), was decorated on all sides with relief depictions of single divinities. In this case, the four divinities depicted are those most commonly found on the *Viergöttersteine* – Juno, Hercules, Minerva, and Mercury, all represented with the standard and easily recognizable Roman iconography. Because of their convenient square format, the *Viergöttersteine* are one of the most commonly preserved elements of the Jupiter columns, since they could easily be re-used as spolia elements in later buildings.[74]

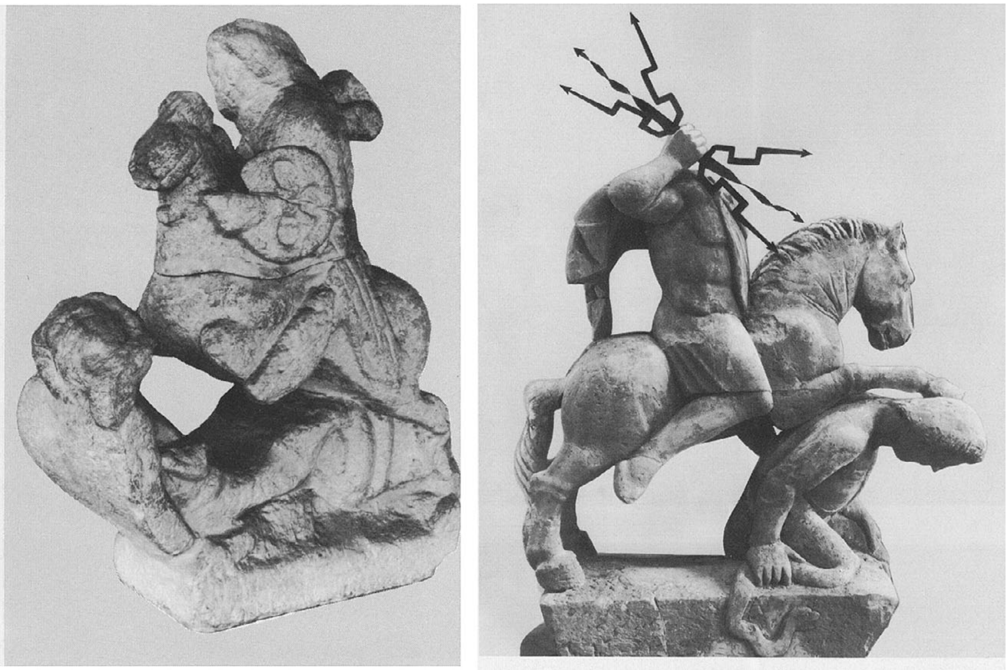
Above the *Viergötterstein*, a smaller rectangular intermediary stone ("*Zwischensockel*") bears the monument's dedicatory inscription, and reliefs



3.17 The recently discovered Jupiter Column from Heidelberg-Neuenheim, Sandstone, H. 4.6 m. (© Kurpfälzisches Museum der Stadt Heidelberg, (Inv. Nr. HD-Neu 2008/150); Photo: K. Gattner, Einhard Kemmet)

of Sol, Luna, and Mars on the other three sides. The inscription reads: *I(ovi) · O(ptimo) · M(aximo) / Mes(sius) · Iblionis/ v(otum) · s(olvit) l(ibens) · l(aetus) · m(erito)* – "To Jupiter Optimus Maximus. Messius, son of Iblio, fulfilled his vow gladly, freely, and deservedly." On other columns, the intermediary stone is sometimes octagonal, with images of planets or gods connected to the days of the week, but it is usually on this element of the columns that the dedicatory inscriptions are found, often identical or similar to those of the altars that accompanied the monument, as was the case at Mainz. Above of the dedicatory stone of the Heidelberg monument is a short column, the surface of which is covered with overlapping scales, a type ("*Schuppensäule*" – "scaled column") that is typical for Jupiter columns. The column terminates in a composite capital, the lower half of which consists of acanthus leaves, with an upper register in which female busts (seasons?) are placed between four titans who support the abacus of the column at its corners with uplifted arms.

The crowning statue of the Heidelberg-Neuenheim column is damaged, but the half that remains can be easily reconstructed from the representations of Jupiter that surmount other columns, like those from Butterstadt (Rhineland-Pfalz, **Fig. 3.18, left**) and Steinsfurt (Baden-Württemberg, **Fig. 3.18, right**).[75] The king of the gods is depicted as a muscular bearded figure on horseback, galloping over a defeated giant whose head pokes out over the edge of the capital and whose snake-like legs trail behind below the horse. The iron



3.18 Left: Jupiter-Giant group from Butterstadt (Main-Sinzig-Kreis). Sandstone, H. 90 cm. Right Jupiter-Giant group from Steinsfurt. Sandstone, H. 69 cm. (Left: (Formerly in the Historisches Museum der Stadt Hanau, Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, pls. 11.2; Right: Badisches Landesmuseum Karlsruhe, inv. no. 62/146) thunderbolts that were held in Jupiter's upraised right hand were recovered in the well in Heidelberg, a rare discovery, comparable to the thunderbolts of bronze found with the more complete Steinfurt Jupiter. Much of this imagery is derived from Classical art, such as the snake-like legs of the giant, which recall the giants of the Hellenistic Altar of Pergamon, or the sea creatures on the so-called Munich reliefs from early first century BC Rome.[76] But depictions of Jupiter as a horseman, like the format and composition of the monument, is a native contribution.

The Jupiter figure in Butterstadt, as on several other columns, holds a wheel in his right arm, a Celtic solar symbol, which appears with one of the figures on the Gundestrup cauldron and elsewhere in Romano-Celtic art.[77] In Germania Inferior, the rider and giant figures are often replaced by an enthroned representation of Jupiter, sometimes accompanied by Juno, a representation taken directly from the standard depiction of Jupiter Capitolinus. The form could hardly be more Roman, but in a few instances, the Celtic wheel adorns the side of Jupiter's throne, throwing another native element into the mix. Elsewhere the god appears in a biga (two-horse chariot), again riding down a giant.[78]

This combination of native and Roman components brings us to the meaning and origin of the Jupiter columns. Traditionally, the image of Jupiter defeating a giant has been read as a symbol of the civilizing force of Rome conquering the barbarian inhabitants of the Celtic and Germanic provinces. This reading conforms to those interpretations of the gigantomachies of Classical and Hellenistic Greek art, e.g. the Altar of Pergamon, that see the victory of the gods as an allegory for the triumph of civilization over barbarism, or of Greek rationality over chaos. Other early interpretations saw the mounted Jupiter as a direct reference to the image of a mounted emperor trampling down barbarian foes, a theme which appears on Roman imperial coins and other artworks, and that can also be traced back to the Hellenistic period. Once again, the theme envisaged was one of Roman order triumphing over barbarians.[79] These interpretations of the columns as symbols of Roman oppression have even been used to explain their later destruction by Germanic invaders or oppressed provincial natives starting in the third century (see Chapter 6), but none of these hypotheses are sustainable.

Reading the Jupiter columns as the bearers of a political message is problematic, if only because many of the columns do not even include the mounted Jupiter conquering a giant that is critical to the interpretation. Moreover, many of the columns were dedicated by private individuals with obviously native names, and they are almost never found in military contexts. In fact, it is unnecessary to look for a political or ideological message in the design and iconography of the Jupiter columns. Most cult images lacked any such message, with the attributes and iconography of divine figures serving mainly to allow the divinity to be recognized in the monument or artwork.

Greg Woolf has interpreted the Jupiter columns in cosmic terms, with their planetary and calendrical imagery representing the divine order of the universe. Woolf retained the idea of a triumph of order over chaos in the capital groups, but only in the sense of a cosmological statement in which a Romano-Celtic version of Jupiter presides over the universe. He saw the symbolism of the columns as comparable to the art of Mithraic reliefs and other oriental religions that flourished at the same time, but, as noted above, also as a means of expressing a local identity through the use of indigenous iconography.[80] Certainly such an interpretation is plausible, but unlike the Mithraic reliefs, which can be found throughout the Roman Empire, the distribution of the Jupiter columns is mostly limited to eastern Gaul and the Rhineland. If the columns did represent a universal divine order, they did so to a very specific and non-universal audience. For our purposes, in considering the birth of a provincial cult image type, the theological significance of the columns is not terribly important. The real question is where did the format of these cult images come from, and why do most of them appear so late if they are really a "native" type?

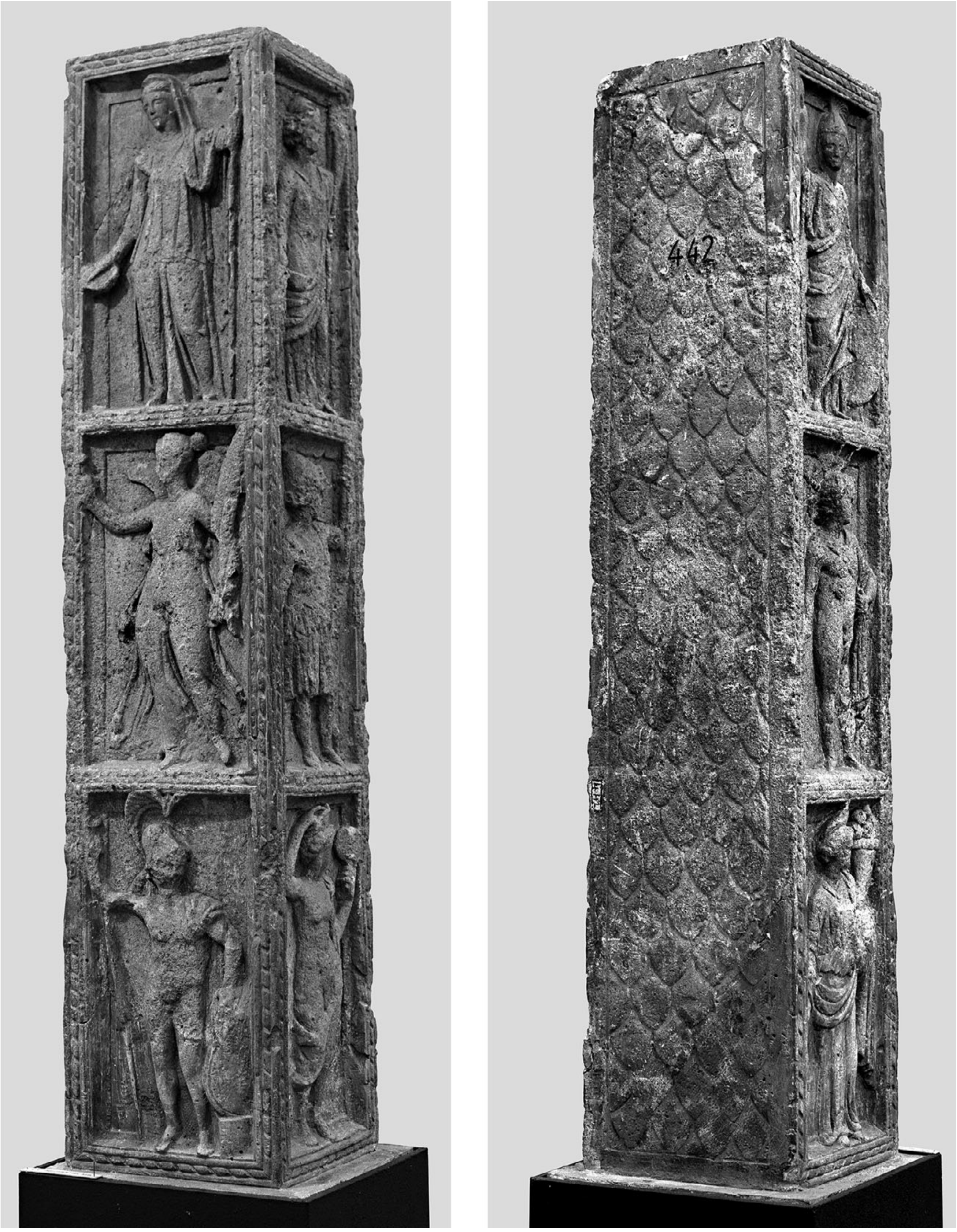
The scales found on many columns have often been interpreted as representing the bark of an oak tree, and one column from Hausen an der Zaber (Baden-Württemberg) actually includes acorns and oak leaves amongst the scales, suggesting a link to Celtic tree-worship.[81] In Gerhard Bauchhenß' view, the Neronian column in Mainz provided the initial impetus for a tradition of Celtic tree cults to be translated into Roman style stone monuments.[82] Peter Noelke, on the other hand, was skeptical of any connection with a tree cult since there is no obvious intermediary monument between trees and Jupiter columns. He viewed the scales as stylized laurel leaves, a translation of the vegetal hangings that adorned Roman altars and other cult images in the Mediterranean world.[83] Noelke pointed to traditions in Rome and the Mediterranean of columns bearing statues of individuals and divinities, including Jupiter, and saw these as the most probable predecessors of the Jupiter columns.[84]

Recent studies have generally de-emphasized the Iron Age and native origins of the monuments, seeing them instead as a purely provincial invention that combined Roman and vaguely Celtic elements.[85] As Wolfgang Spickermann puts it: "The Jupiter-Giant Columns are then an independent product of Gallo-Roman provincial religion, with both Celtic and Roman elements, though these may not be clearly distinct from one another."[86] As we shall see shortly, the second century boom in the production of the Jupiter columns was contemporaneous with the dedication of many reliefs and statues representing the mother goddesses, another non-Roman triad of divinities, which have likewise been interpreted as a sort of provincial invention. This sort of model of provincial invention may explain later dating of many of the Jupiter columns, but it still leaves us with no sense of what inspired their format.

It seems to me that it is an enormous coincidence if the earliest and largest surviving example of a Jupiter column also happens to have been the very model for the many hundreds of variants that appeared 100 years later or more.[87] Even if the column in Mainz was the prototype for all other columns, and if the form of the Jupiter columns was developed in Mainz in the first century AD, it was still surely based on something more than the imagination of the sculptors Samus and Severus or the whims of the monument's sponsors Q. Julius Priscus and Q. Julius Auctus. The overall design was clearly not one taken from the Mediterranean world, even if columns bearing statues of Jupiter could be found there. There must have been some other common factor that made the columns so popular later on, and so easily understandable and desirable to those who commissioned their construction and conducted ritual activities around them.

The simplest explanation is that there was some kind of Iron Age monument type, or several similar types, on which the Jupiter columns were at least distantly based. No examples of this predecessor monument have survived for the very simple reason that, like many Iron Age cult images discussed in the last chapter, they were made of wood. We may never know if they were actual trees with images carved in their trunks or attached to them at intervals up the trunk, or were post-like wooden idols with multiple registers. But the veneration of such a wooden monument or tree would not have been particularly shocking to the Romans, who themselves had a long tradition of sacred trees.[88] Such pre-Roman or early Roman monuments, even if composed of wood, would likely still have been visible when the stone Jupiter columns began to be developed in the second century AD.

Reflections of this same Iron Age precursor, or some relation to it, can also be seen in the stacked Pillar of the Sailors and in the four gods carved into the Menhir of Kernuz (**Fig. 2.3**). It seems as if an indigenous idea of a monument with divinities on four sides that was expressed and standardized in the *Viergöttersteine* of the Jupiter columns. A rectangular pillar from Cologne (**Fig. 3.19**), decorated with scales on one side and registers with divinities on the others, as well as a few others like it from Cologne and the northern Rhine, may well represent a sort of hybrid or intermediary type between the Pillar of the Sailors and the Jupiter columns.[89] The registers of the pillar each contain a divinity, recalling the stacked blocks of the Pillar of the Sailors and the divinities on the shaft of the Jupiter column at Mainz, but the Cologne pillar also includes the scales typical of later Jupiter column shafts, and is also carved from a single block. Unlike the Jupiter columns, however, the rectangular stacked pillars did not enjoy a revival or later widespread rise in popularity.



3.19 The four sides of a pillar from Cologne, possibly representing an intermediary type between the rectangular columns of Paris, Nijmegen, and Mavilly, and the common Jupiter columns. Three sides depicted divinities in panels, while the fourth has the scales of the Jupiter columns. Limestone, H. 1.10 m. (Arachne, FA376–04: arachne.dainst.org/entity/6549767; FA376–05: arachne.dainst.org/entity/6549768; Photos by P. Gross)

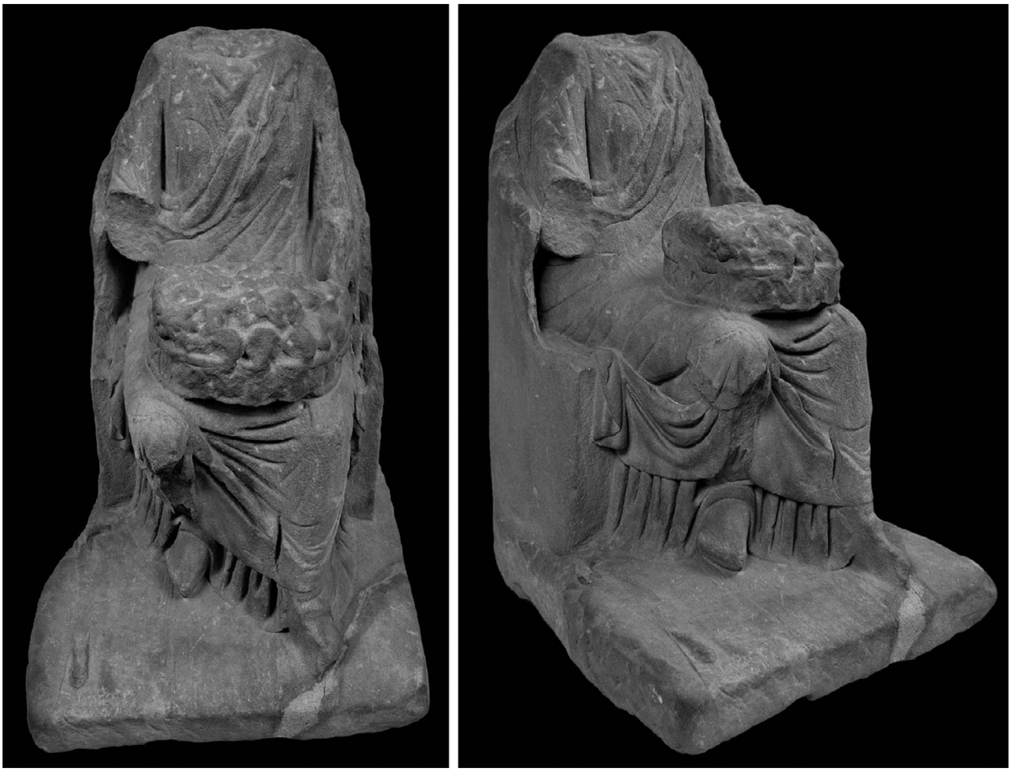
The Mother Goddesses: Matronae and Matres

Mother goddesses, sometimes in pairs and groups of three, are another prominent native divinity type. Like the Jupiter columns, images of the mother goddesses have also been interpreted as an invention of Roman provincial society, since most date to the second and third centuries AD. Inscriptions identify them as "Matres" throughout the Celtic world, and as the "Matronae" on the lower Rhine. In both cases, the name is often followed by a Celtic or Germanic theonym, and images of mother goddesses with inscriptions employing native theonyms alone also exist. Most of these theonyms seem to have some sort of local significance, referring to a tribe or area, but over time the goddesses became more universal.

Dedications to specific local mother goddesses are also known from soldiers and others traveling abroad. For instance, there are examples of dedications made to the Matronae Aufaniae, goddesses who belonged in the Rhineland, from Lyon in southern Gaul, and Carmona in Spain.[90] The concept of the mothers could also be applied universally or to broad regions, especially in military settings, as in the case of two altars in Britain dedicated to the "*matrib(us) ltalis Germanis Gal(/is) Brit(tis)*" – "the Italian, German, Gallic, and British mothers" at Winchester, or a dedication to the "*Matribus omnium gentium*" – the "Mothers of all peoples" from Castlesteads.[91] Evidently soldiers stationed together from different parts of the Celtic and Germanic world recognized the concept of the mother goddesses.

The basic iconography of the mother goddesses may have been influenced by Roman representations of Fortuna – both are female figures seated on thrones, but while Fortuna always holds a rudder and cornucopia, the mother goddesses hold an array of different attributes in their laps, including baskets of fruit, pots, nursing babies, and dogs.[92] The mothers appear as mass-produced terracotta figurines, as stone sculptures in the round, and in relief carvings, especially on votive altars, where they are very often depicted inside an *aediculum* with a conch-shell roof.[93]

A headless mother goddess statue found *in situ* at the Trier Altbachtal complex in 1925 is a good example of the type (**Fig. 3.20**). Dated to the second half of the second century AD on the basis of stylistic similarities to relief representations, the goddess sits in a wicker chair, holding a basket of fruits in her lap. Her left arm is broken, and only a single paw remains of a dog that once sat at her feet.[94] Three more examples of mother goddesses were found in pits at Le Bernard, two in stone and one in wood (see **Fig. 6.11**), and a very badly damaged statue from a small temple in the Mars Lenus sanctuary complex in Trier was obviously the central idol of the shrine in which it was found (see **Fig. 4.12**).[95] These examples may be considered representative of the mother goddesses, whose iconography is relatively standardized across a large part of the Romano-Celtic world.



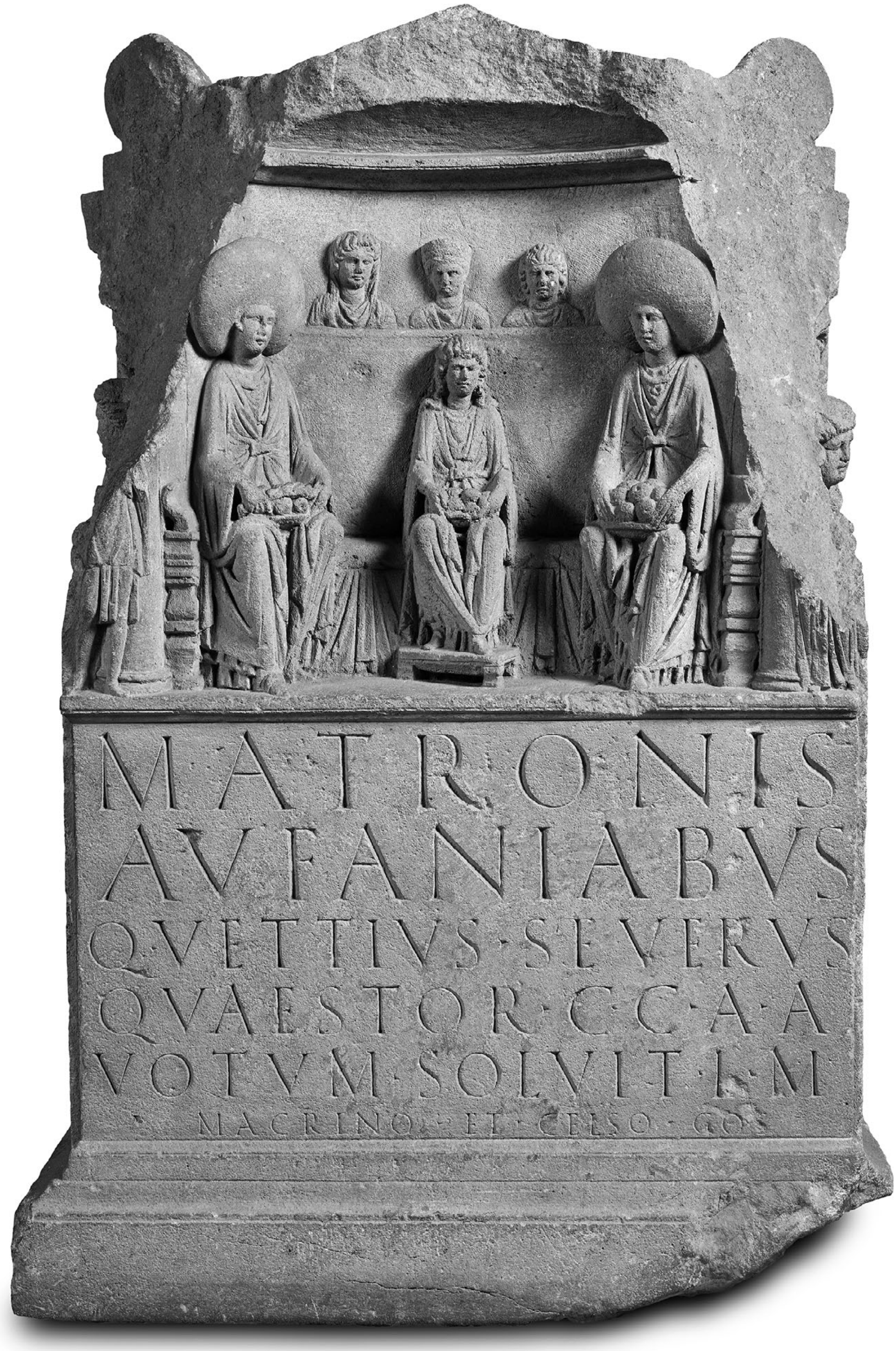
3.20 Mother Goddess from temple 24 at Trier Altbachtal. Sandstone, H. 80 cm. (© GDKE/Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Photo: Th. Zühmer)

Though fertility and motherhood were major aspects of these goddesses, they were responsible for other spheres of influence as well.[96] Their theonyms suggest a function as guardian spirits of places, much like the *genii loci*, and some seem to be connected with water, as was likely the case at Le Bernard, where the statues were found in disused wells. The goddess Nehalennia, a mother goddess type found only on a group of altars found on the Dutch coast near Domburg in 1645, seems to have offered special protection and safe passage to travelers preparing to cross the English Channel.[97]

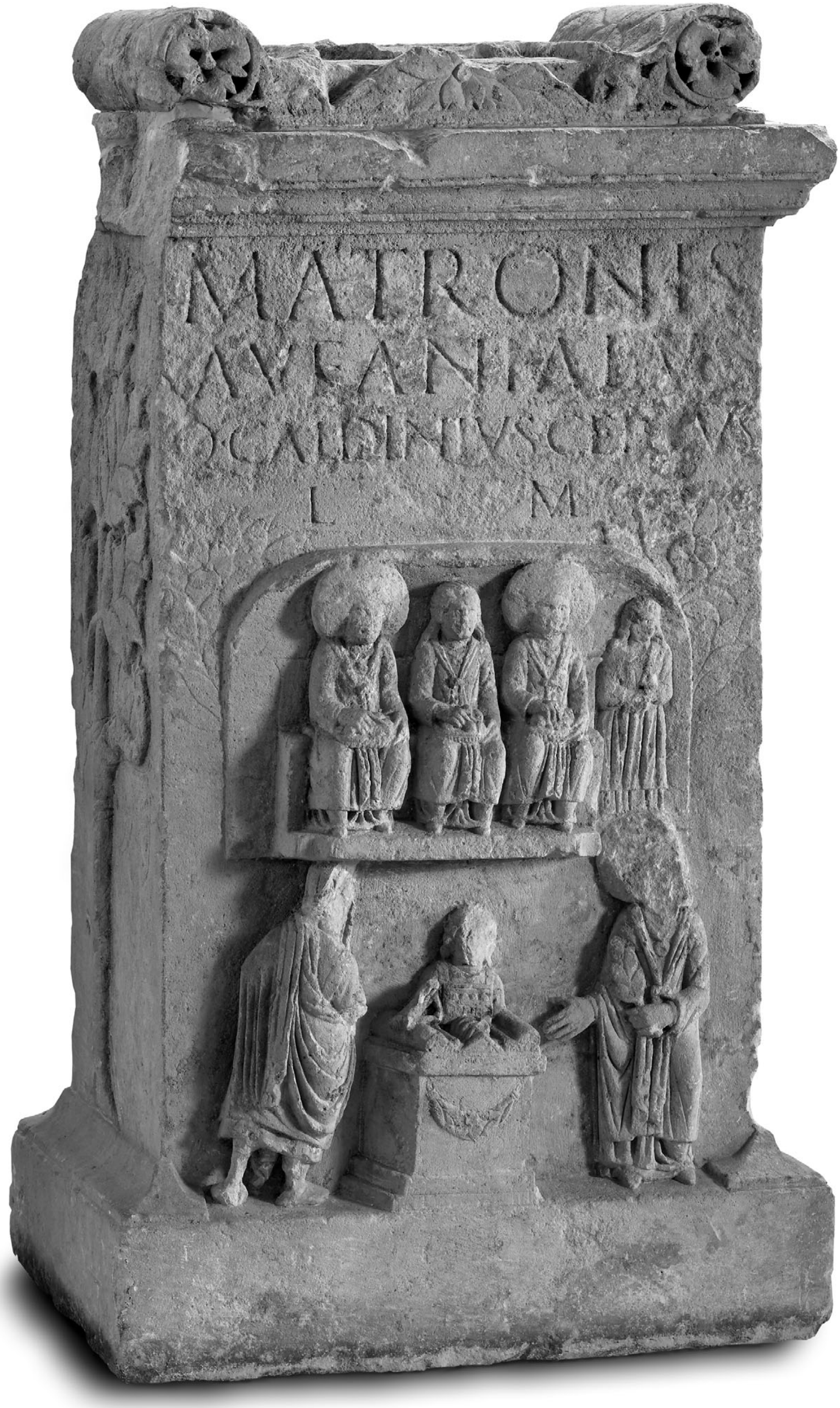
The most important variation of the mother goddesses are the Matronae, a triad of mother goddesses worshiped in Germania Inferior, especially around Bonn and Cologne in the territory of the Ubii, a Germanic tribe that was re-settled west of the Rhine under Augustus. Eight temples and more than 500 inscribed monuments of the Matronae have been recorded, most of which date between the late second and mid-third centuries AD.[98] Around 100 native theonyms are known for the Matronae, some of which are specific to a single sanctuary, such as the Matronae Vacallinehae, who were worshiped only in their sanctuary at Pesch. Other theonyms appear at multiple sites, such as the Matronae Aufaniae who were venerated at Bonn, Nettersheim, and Xanten.[99] Linguistically, most of the names are Germanic, suggesting that the cult was imported to Germania Inferior by the Ubii. The native theonyms seem to refer to groups of Germanic people, perhaps individual tribes or clans of the Ubii, but a few may be connected to specific places, springs, rivers, and even types of tree.[100]

Regardless of which native theonym was used, the iconography of the second century representations of the Matronae is very consistent. They are depicted as a group of three women who appear seated on a bench (*exedra*), each with a basket of fruit on her lap. The central goddess appears to be younger than the outside two, who wear highly characteristic lunate hair style or headdresses that are somewhat reminiscent of female portraiture of the Flavian period. All three are dressed in a long undergarment and a cloak that is joined at the front by a distinctive square brooch, and they frequently wear a crescent-shaped amulet around their necks. The backs and sides of votive altars of the Matronae are often are decorated with images of trees and goats, and less commonly with birds and snakes.[101] In some instances, altars to the Matronae depict the goddesses as statues, with their bases clearly visible, as for example on a relief from Bonn where the statues are approached by a procession, or within a temple setting that is denoted by pillars and a roof with a hemispherical *aediculum*. Sometimes a sacrifice is being conducted in front of them, and figures who sometimes appear near the goddesses have been variously identified as temple servants, priestesses, and worshipers (**Figs. 3.21** and **3.22**).[102]

A group of votive altars to the Matronae was found under the cathedral of Bonn in 1920, along with a building inscription indicating that the altars had once stood in a nearby temple to the Matronae Aufaniae. These include altars dedicated by Quintus Vettius Severus (**Fig. 3.21**) and Q. Caldinius Celsus (**Fig. 3.22**). The Vettius altar can be dated by its inscription to the year AD 164, and has often been described as the earliest testimony for the Matronae cult, as well as the earliest anthropomorphic representation of the goddesses.[103] In the first serious study of the Matronae, Christoph Rüger and Heinz-Günter Horn proposed that the cult image of the temple in Bonn served as the prototype for all later images of the goddesses, in much the same way that the Neronian Jupiter column in Mainz was the prototype for all later Jupiter columns. This adoption of an anthropomorphic cult image for a native triad, they argued, was due to the highly Romanized atmosphere of Bonn, which like Mainz was the site of a legionary fortress.[104] More recent studies of the Matronae by Ton Derks, Wolfgang Spickermann and Frank Biller, have concluded that some other altars dedicated to the Matronae must date to just before AD 150, including an inscribed altar from Jülich, which cannot be later than AD 120, while some of the early temple buildings of the Matronae sanctuary at Pesch belong to the Flavian period.[105] Thus the cult of the Matronae was certainly active prior to the carving of the Vettius altar and the construction of their temple in Bonn, but what about the images of the goddesses?


MATRONIS
AVFANIABVS
Q·VETTIVS·SEVERVS
QVAESTOR·C·C·A·A
VOTVM·SOLVIT·L·M
MACRINO·ET·CELSO·COS

3.21 The altar of Q. Vettius Severus from Bonn. Behind the usual depiction of the Matronae are the dedicators, and to their left and right, damaged representations of servants. Limestone, H. 1.3 m. (LVR-LandesMuseum Bonn, Photo: Jürgen Vogel)


MATRONIS
AVFANIABVS
Q CALDINIVS CELSVS
L M

3.22 The votive altar of Q. Caldinius Celsus for the Matronae Aufaniae in Bonn, AD 180. A sacrifice is conducted in front of an *aediculum* containing the Matronae. Sandstone, H. 1.2 m. (LVR-LandesMuseum Bonn, Photo: Axel Thünker)

With no surviving image demonstrably earlier than the second century AD, studies of the Matronae have generally envisaged a "pre-anthropomorphic" or "animistic" phase in the early Roman history of the cult. The influence of the old aniconic theory of Celtic religion can be felt strongly in a debate that has raged over the question of what the cult was focused on prior to its adoption of Roman style cult images. Rüger suggested that goats were central to the cult in its earliest phases, since these animals are depicted on the sides of several Matronae altars.[106] Horn interpreted a tree protruding from the roof of a temple building depicted on the side of an altar from Bonn, as well as fragments of a stone tree with a snake wrapped around it from the temple at Pesch, as evidence of a pre-anthropomorphic tree cult of the Matronae.[107] Spickermann and Biller concurred that the early cult involved the veneration of sacred trees, again based on the periphery images of trees found on Matronae dedications. Spickermann imagined the sacred trees of individual tribes of the Ubii being brought over from the eastern side of the Rhine when the Ubii were settled in their new territory, and remaining part of the cult even during its later anthropomorphic phases.[108] In support of this theory, Tacitus does describe trees as being sacred to Germans, and some of the epithets of the Matronae could conceivably be references to tree species.[109]

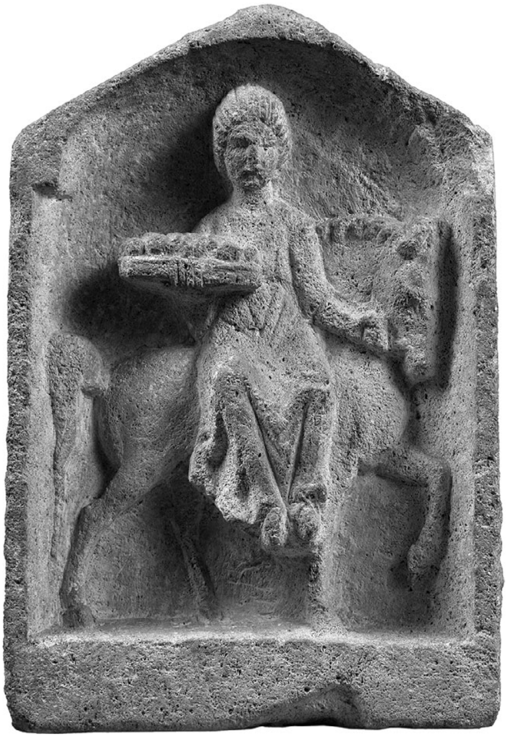
As Derks has pointed out, however, there is no need to enforce evolutionary stages on the cult of the Matronae in which naturalistic objects of veneration were replaced by stone idols. It is entirely possible that a cult in which animals or trees were venerated simultaneously used anthropomorphic images. Derks argued that the Flavian period temple structures found at Pesch can only have served to house cult images, and suggested that the many uninscribed, and thus undated, sculptures of the Matronae may well belong to the first century AD.[110] Given the difficulties inherent in dating Roman provincial art, and the possibility of early wooden depictions explored here, this point cannot be dismissed out of hand. Whether the early temple buildings at Pesch were built to house idols, or for some other reason, is perhaps less certain. The continuity of place, however, is not a bad indicator for a continuity of function.

Not only is it unnecessary to imagine an aniconic phase for the cult of the Matronae, it is even problematic to do so. If the highly distinctive image of the three goddesses with their unusual hairstyles or headgear and various attributes was an invention of the early second century AD, then why did it take this particular form? If the impetus to adopt an anthropomorphic figure came from the Romanized atmosphere of Bonn, and a single cult image in a temple there, then why did the cult not adapt the iconography of some Roman divinity in its entirety?

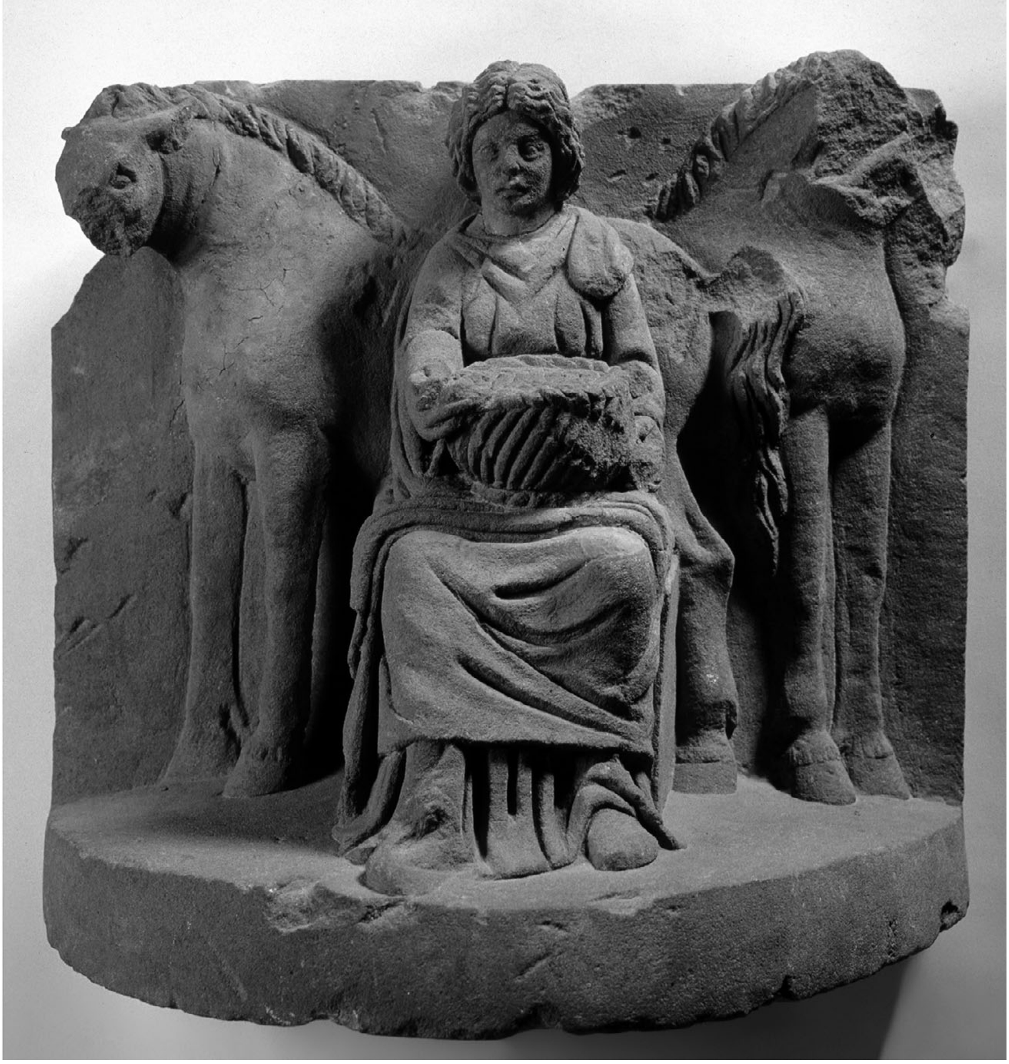
The simplest explanation is once again that there were already images of the Matronae that had dictated the features of the second century reliefs like those of Vettius Severus and Caldinius Celsus. The attributes and iconography of the cult images of the second century and later had already been established in earlier images. In form, these earliest Matronae must have been something between the *Holzidole* and the more plastic wooden representation of a mother goddess found at Le Bernard. While different from second century art, these early images were sufficient to convey iconographic detail such as the head-dresses and distinctive costumes of the goddesses. Like the Jupiter columns, the Matronae were not a Roman period invention. The style of both the Jupiter columns and images of the Matronae may well have been greatly influenced by Roman art, but their iconography was rooted in the pre-Roman past. As cult images, they were a new development in a trend rather than the abrupt birth of an utterly new kind of cult image.

Epona

Just as stone representations of cross-legged divinities are very close to the wooden example from Crêt-Chatelard, the wooden Epona from Saintes is very similar to the many relief depictions of the goddess in stone. Epona, another example of a "native" divinity, is known in over 200 representations in the Romano-Celtic world.[111] Her name is derived from the Celtic word for horse, "*epos*," and she is never depicted without one. Normally, Epona is represented sitting side-saddle on a horse with a basket of produce in her lap or hands, as, for example, on a small relief from Trier Altbachtal (**Fig. 3.23**), and on the wooden statuettes from Saintes and Saint-Valérien (**Figs. 3.8** and **3.9**).[112] Like the Celtic mother goddesses, she is occasionally accompanied by a dog, and sometimes holds a child on her lap instead of a basket. In other depictions she sits enthroned, flanked on either side by horses, as on a high relief from the Roman fort at Köngen (**Fig. 3.24**), the composition of which is broadly similar to the wooden figures from Fellbach-Schmiden (**Fig. 2.23**), with two animals facing outward from a central figure.[113]



3.23 Epona from Trier Altbachtal. Limestone, H. 41.5 cm. (© GDKE/Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Photo: Th. Zühmer)



3.24 Enthroned Epona from Köngen. Sandstone, H. 48 cm. (Landesmuseum Württemberg, Inv. No. RL416 Photo: P. Frankenstein / H. Zwietasch)

Once again, the majority of extant Epona representations date to the second and third centuries AD, but the goddess was well known even in Italy long before that point. The earliest reference to Epona is in a private calendar from Guidizollo, in northern Italy, from the year 27 BC that records a festival to the goddess on December 18th.[114] In Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, a statue of Epona is described in a stable adorned with fresh roses, and the target of one of Juvenal's satires is accused of swearing oaths only to pictures of the goddess painted on stable walls.[115] While Epona was evidently worshiped in stables, the Altbachtal relief, an inscription from Entrains-sur-Nohain (*Interanum*, Nièvre), which records a temple in her honor, and a series of small votive plaques dedicated to Epona in the Romano-Celtic temple at Châteaubleau (Seine-Maritime), show that she could be venerated in temples like other gods as well.[116] It is likely that the cult of Epona was spread by auxiliary cavalry of Celtic extraction, since inscribed dedications to the goddess are most common in military zones, though her images are far more widespread, and seem to owe almost nothing to the traditions of Mediterranean art.

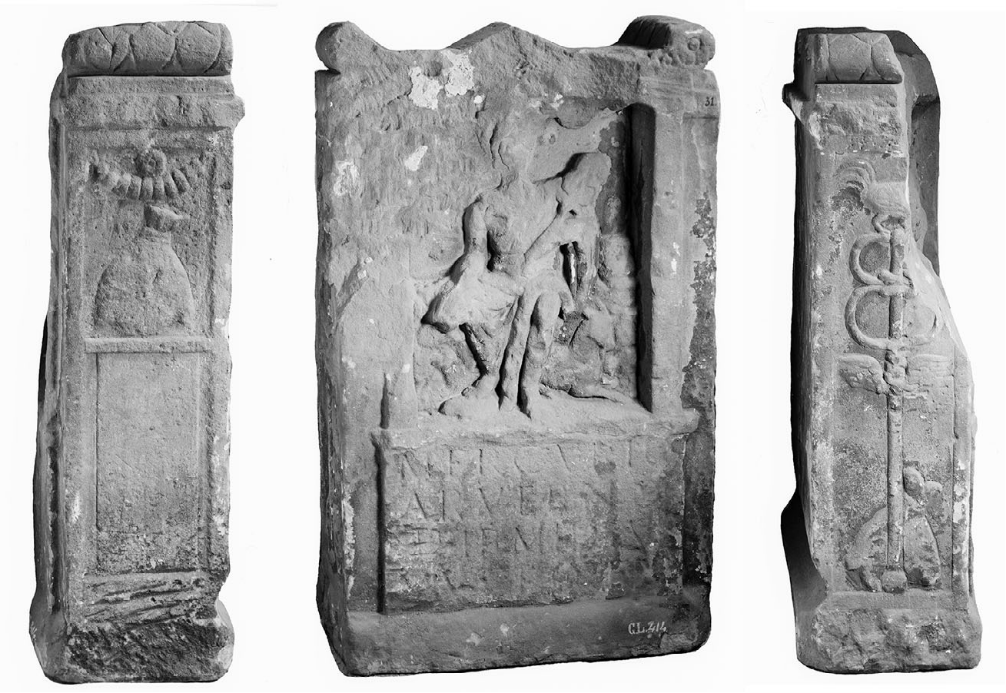
CLASSICAL ICONOGRAPHY

A full survey of the iconographically standard Roman divinities found in Gaul and Germany would not only be extremely lengthy, but is also unnecessary for the purposes of this book. These representations of the gods appeared in the provinces as they did in Rome or Italy, save perhaps that in many instances the style of the sculpture is often cruder or provincial. Only a few examples are discussed here to illustrate both their ubiquity and the varied quality of provincial artistry. Just as some native divinities retained their Iron Age forms, or at least derivations thereof, others were completely absorbed or replaced by Roman-style representations. Thus we find gods with Celtic theonyms and epithets represented in purely classical form. Occasionally the odd native attribute or element leaks over into an otherwise purely classical representation, blurring slightly the classification of an individual sculpture, and reminding us that these categories of Roman and native cult images are divisions of our own making.

The process of translating Celtic divinities into conventional Roman iconographies must have begun in Gaul and Germany almost immediately after the conquest, and was initiated by some of the native elites very early on. According to Pliny, the leading citizens of the Arverni commissioned a colossal statue of Mercury from the Greek artist Zenodorus in the reign of Nero:

> *Verum omnem amplitudinem statuarum eius generis vicit aetate nostra Zenodorus Mercurio facto in civitate Galliae Arvernis per annos decem, HS* |$\overline{\text{CCCC}}$| *manipretii . . .*
>
> But Zenodorus outdid all the gigantic statues of this kind in our own time when he made a Mercury in the civitas of the Arverni of Gaul over a period of ten years and at a cost of 40,000,000 sesterces.
>
> Pliny HN 34.18.45 (my translation)

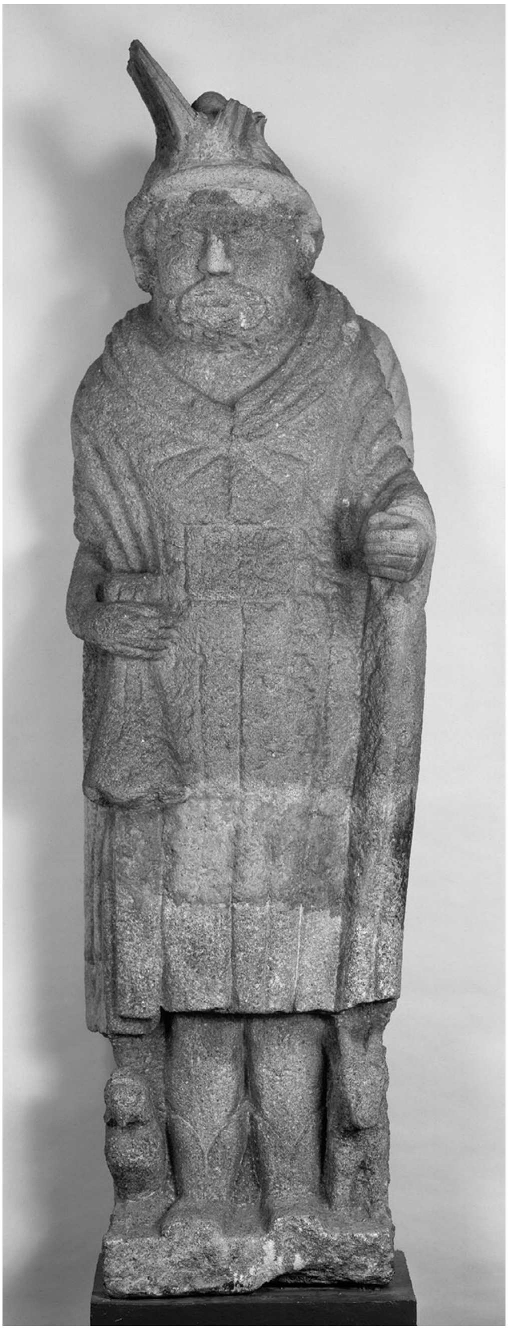
By commissioning the leading Greek artist of the day to construct this wonder, the Arverni were showing both their cultural refinement and their understanding of Roman culture in a spectacular way. If we take Pliny's preceding discussion of colossal statues as accurate, we may infer that Zenodorus created a bronze statue composed of multiple hollow pieces that exceeded 13 m in height.[117] Though we have no account of how or where Zenodorus' improbably large



3.25 Altar with dedication to and representation of Mercury Arvernus from Horn, Netherlands. The sides of the altar are decorated with the conventional Roman attributes of Mercury, the cock, the money bag, and the caduceus. (National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden)

Mercury was displayed, it is often assumed to have been located on the Puy du Dôme mountain, where evidence for a temple to Mercury has been found, albeit without any trace of the colossus or its base.[118]

The only clue to the statue's appearance comes from a small altar found at Horn, in the Netherlands, that was dedicated to Mercurius Arvernus (**Fig. 3.25**). Though damaged, the relief on the altar shows Mercury seated on a pile of stones inside an aediculum, wearing a chlamys and petasos, with a goat at his feet. The caduceus leans against his left shoulder, and a bag of money rests on his right knee.[119] If the altar is an accurate reproduction of the Mercury Arvernus of Zenodorus, then the colossus, as we might expect from a Greek artist, followed same basic the pattern of other seated Hellenistic statues of divinities. It included all of the attributes of Mercury as he was known in the Mediterranean world.[120] The sides of the temple-shaped altar repeat the familiar attributes of the god, depicting a caduceus with a cock and money bag on one side, and the bag of money on top of an altar on the other. While conventional to Roman or Mediterranean eyes, the colossus must have seemed radically different to those who were accustomed to the sort of cult images hitherto produced in Gaul.



3.26 The colossal Mercury from Lezoux with votive inscription. The lower section below the bottom of the money bag is a restoration. Arkose, 1.5 m in height, ca. 2.5 m, when complete. (Musée d'Archéologie Nationale, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY)

Caesar wrote that Mercury was the most popular of the Gallic gods and the very numerous Roman period inscriptions and representations of him in the Romano-Celtic world confirm this statement. We will probably never know if a single universal Celtic divinity, possibly Lugus, was translated totally into Mercury, or many different divinities were classified under the one Roman divinity name.[121] Most depictions of Mercury in Gaul show him with the very same attributes found in Greco-Roman art. These include the head of a life-sized statue of Mercury found at the Romano-Celtic temple at Tawern, just outside of Trier, that was probably also carved in the first century AD (**Fig. 6.7**). Like the Mercury Arvernus, the Tawern head represents the best, or at least most conventionally Mediterranean, style of Roman provincial art, in which great attention has been paid to naturalistic anatomy and proportions. Other representations were much cruder, or provincial in style, even if their iconography was equally conventional. Regardless of what level of quality and naturalism the new Mercury representations possessed, they belonged to the visual language of Roman art, and were recognizable by natives and foreigners alike.

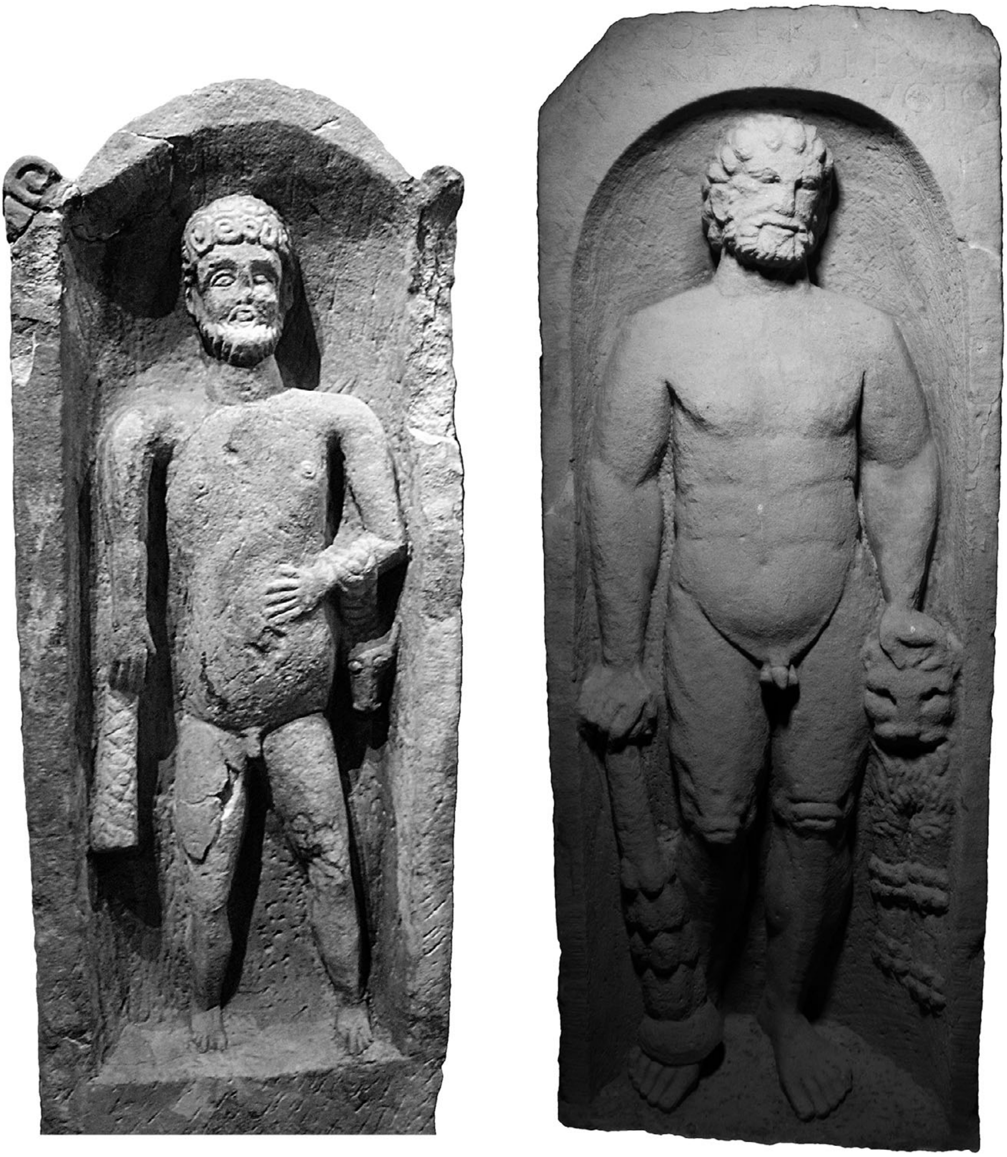
In a few instances, small details from Iron Age imagery have been passed on into Roman representations. A colossal feldspar statue of Mercury found at Lezoux (Puy-de-Dôme) in 1891 (**Fig. 3.26**), is a good example of a deviation from Greco-Roman iconographic norms in a provincial context. The god carries a purse in his right hand, probably once held a caduceus in his left, and wears the petasos on his head. But instead of the usual beardless nude youth, the Lezoux Mercury is an older bearded male wearing a long hooded mantle.

The identity of the god is secured in a *tabula ansata* inscribed on his chest which reads: "*Mercurio et Augusto sacrum.*" – "A dedication to Mercury and Augustus" which is supplemented by a second inscription in Celtic on his back. The beady externalized eyes and crude facial features, as well as the elongated linear character of the carving, have been interpreted as indications of an artist who was either inspired by wood-working techniques, or was more accustomed to carving in that medium.[122] It is not impossible that the piece was modeled in part on a wooden Iron Age model, and in part on the newly introduced Roman iconography of the god Mercury.

The many reliefs depicting Hercules Salutaris that were found at Deneuvre (Meurthe-et-Moselle, **Fig. 3.27**) are good examples of cult images carved in a provincial style but with strictly classical iconography.

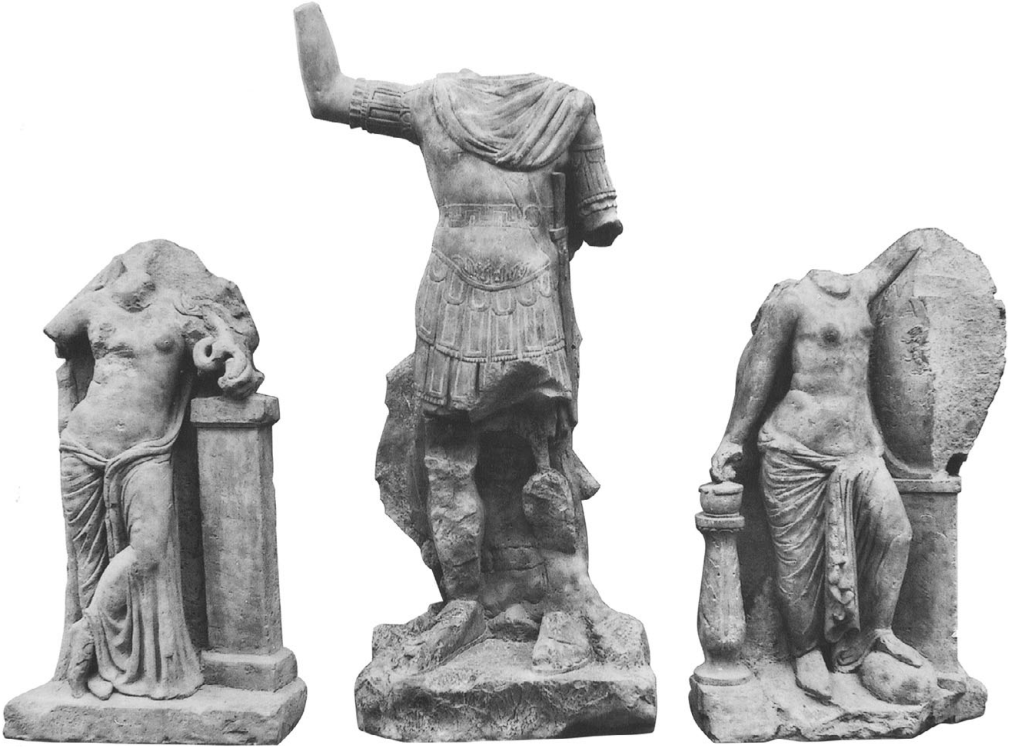
The site at which they were found has been interpreted as a simple open air spring sanctuary, far removed from large settlements or towns. Though it lacked monumental buildings of any kind (see below, and **Fig. 3.22**), the site has yielded no less than twenty-five complete votive reliefs, and the fragments of many others, that were probably carved between the mid-second and third centuries. Most depict Hercules with his club and lion skin, just as he might be found in Rome.[123] On many of the reliefs there is little of the accurate proportions and naturalism that one expects in conventional art. Tube-like arms as long as legs emerge from stiff rectangular bodies, and possess spidery hands and feet. Some of the reliefs are more naturalistic than others, but most importantly the conventional attributes of Hercules are always present. If there were holdouts of Iron Age cult images and iconography in the Roman period, there was also a deep penetration of Roman artistic ideas into the countryside. In sum, conventional Roman iconography in provincial art was in no way limited to the cities, towns, and legionary fortresses.

In utter contrast to the Mercury of Lezoux or the cruder reliefs from Deneuvre, purely classical iconography and naturalism could be found in the provinces as well. This includes depictions of Mars as he was represented in the Temple of Mars Ultor in the Forum of Augustus in Rome.[124] A statue of the Mars Ultor type was found in a Roman watchtower that had been converted into a temple at Schneidershecke, on the Odenwald limes, and stood alongside equally Roman representations of Salus and Victoria inscribing a shield with the word VICTORIA (**Fig. 3.28**).[125] The form of the balteus worn by Mars is identical to Roman military belts of the late second and early third century AD, and thus provides a firm date for the group.[126] The quality of the carving is obviously much better than most provincial sculptures, and likely reflects the military milieu that commissioned and used the sculptures.



3.27 Reliefs depicting Hercules from the sanctuary of Hercules Salutaris at Deneuvre. Left: sandstone, H. 174 × 65 cm. Right: sandstone, 201 × 73 cm. (Musée les Sources d'Hercule. Photo: Communauté de Communes du Territoire de Lunéville à Baccarat)

The statues probably stood under an arch-shaped niche in the south-west wall of this rather unusual watchtower temple at Schneidershecke, but they were not always displayed there. A fragment of Victoria's shield with the letters ORIA was found at the auxiliary fort at Oberscheidenthal, some 7 km from the watchtower. The fragment fits into the shield of the Schneidershecke Victory perfectly, and traces of plaster on the shield show that these figures



3.28 Sculptural group from Schneidershecke watchtower sanctuary depicting Salus, Mars Ultor, and Victoria inscribing a shield. Sandstone, Salus H. 1.00 m, Mars Ultor, H. 1.35 m, and Victoria, H. 1.00 m. (Badisches Landesmuseum Karlsruhe, inv. nos. C4868, C4869 and C4870)

had been repaired prior to their installation at Schneidershecke. It seems most likely that the images were first displayed in the fort before being damaged, repaired, and then moved to the converted watchtower – another example of the shifting biographies of cult images.

Another high quality Mars Ultor, this time life sized, was found in a civilian temple in the Trier Altbachtal temple complex, broken into hundreds of pieces, and re-used in a secondary context. It is unclear whether the Mars was originally displayed in one of the temples in the complex, as is usually proposed, or was a decorative statue in the nearby cult theater.[127] Trier is a provincial capital and large city, and Schneidershecke a Roman military site, which might explain the highly Roman choices, but equally canonical and naturalistic images can be found in the remote countryside as well.

From the relatively remote spring sanctuary Hochscheid, we have two large representations of Apollo Citharoedus, a mode of depicting Apollo that had been current in the Mediterranean world since the Hellenistic period (**Fig. 6.5 left**, and **6.6**), and an equally classical relief of the goddess Hygeia/Salus (**Fig. 6.5**, **right**), who is identified as the Celtic Sirona in an accompanying altar. The temple dates back to at least the first century AD, but the statues are thought to be products of the later second century. The larger of the two Apollos and the relief of Sirona have been interpreted as the idols of the site's only temple building, though mainly because they are the largest images recovered at the site.[128] Whatever their status, these sculptures were utterly classical in terms of their iconography, and were of relatively high quality carving given the remote setting.

From the Roman conquest onward, iconographically Greco-Roman depictions of divinities were present in Gaul and Germany, at least amongst those elite members of society who could afford to commission and dedicate sculpted monuments. By the late first century AD, such representations of gods were common both in the countryside and in provincial capitals. As with the native types, there is a surge in volume in the second and third centuries AD, though the issue of dating uninscribed images makes any assessment of trends especially difficult.

When Caesar commented that the Gauls revered the god Mercury most of all, and possessed many images of him, he was translating a Celtic divinity, or group of divinities, to a name that was understandable to a Roman audience.[129] Long after the conquest, the native inhabitants of Roman Gaul evidently made this same translation voluntarily, or found it natural to worship Mercury, having forgotten his pre-Roman equivalent. Yet it seems most unlikely that the many images seen by Caesar were particularly uniform, and they would certainly not have had the Roman attributes of the petasos and winged sandals. Only rare exceptions like the Mercury from Lezoux present an early clash, or combination of Roman and Iron Age traits. In these rare instances, the transformation of Iron Age iconography to that of a fully Roman divinity was not complete. For the most part, however, whether making replacing old idols, or making new dedications, individual provincials preferred to adopt the classical iconography of the god. Why did Roman iconography supersede Iron Age precedents, whatever they may have been, in the production of new cult images?

To some extent, the introduction of the Roman tradition of dedicating votive altars and reliefs in stone would have naturally driven a shift toward Mediterranean iconography. Roman visual imagery was simply the default setting for monuments such as altars and reliefs that had not been part of Iron Age religious life. Moreover, Iron Age art was highly localized, but the Roman image of Mercury was universally acceptable and instantly understandable to virtually all the inhabitants of the Roman Empire. This widespread recognition may well have been the motivating factor behind the initial adoption of purely Roman iconographic forms in provincial religious art.

While the native types of images discussed above retained at least some elements of pre-Roman iconography, the more common conventionally

Roman types abandoned it completely. Continuity existed alongside change in the production of provincial cult images. Changes in artistic styles over time are to be anticipated in any society, but the arrival of the Romans in Western Europe caused a major rupture in social and religious order that was reflected in the artistic traditions of the Celts and Germans. The adoption of classical iconography and stone monuments was to the Romano-Celtic world what the rejection of Etruscan style images of clay and wood, in favor of marble and bronze statues of the Greek world, had been to Republican Rome.

THE MYSTERY CULTS AND MITHRAIC CULT IMAGES

One of the major developments in cult imagery in Gaul and Germany was part of an empire-wide trend – the adoption of what modern scholars have termed the mystery cults. From the second- to late-third centuries AD, a series of cults of supposedly Asian or Egyptian origin became increasingly popular throughout the Roman Empire. Unlike traditional Roman public cults, participation in the mystery cults was limited to initiates, who underwent a series of secret ceremonies that brought them closer to divinities like Magna Mater, Isis, Jupiter Sabazius, Jupiter Dolichenus, and, of course, Mithras.[130] As a final example of innovation in the development of Roman cult images, we will consider the case of Mithraism.

Adhered to largely by soldiers and low level government administrators, the cult of Mithras involved the veneration of an entirely new kind of idol, the tauroctony, or bull-slaying scene, of which we have many hundreds of examples, some of which have even been found *in situ* in Mithraic temples, or Mithraea. Many of our best preserved Mithraea and Mithraic cult images are from Roman Germany, though they have been found in Britain, Italy, especially Rome, the Balkans, all along the Danube, and in a few scattered locations in Rome's eastern provinces.[131] The Mithraic temples, to which we will return in the next chapter, were intentionally small, such that the number of initiates in each Mithraic community was limited, and at several sites multiple Mithraea were in use simultaneously.

Our evidence for the cult's beliefs and activities is largely in the form of artworks and the excavations of Mithraea, with textual evidence being particularly sparse. While there are certainly strong similarities between Mithraea and Mithraic art throughout the Roman Empire, recent studies have emphasized regional trends that reflect the identities of individuals within Mithraic communities. Moreover, the nature of the cult may well have changed between its initial appearance in the late first-century AD and the late fourth, when it dwindled away. The serious consideration of small finds from Mithraea provides a tantalizing new window into the Mithraic world, but remains a relatively new approach.[132] It is generally agreed that the benefits of social networking were a major attraction for Mithraic initiates, but the idea of Mithras as an intervenor in the initiate's daily affairs was present in the cult just as much as it was in conventional Roman religion.[133]

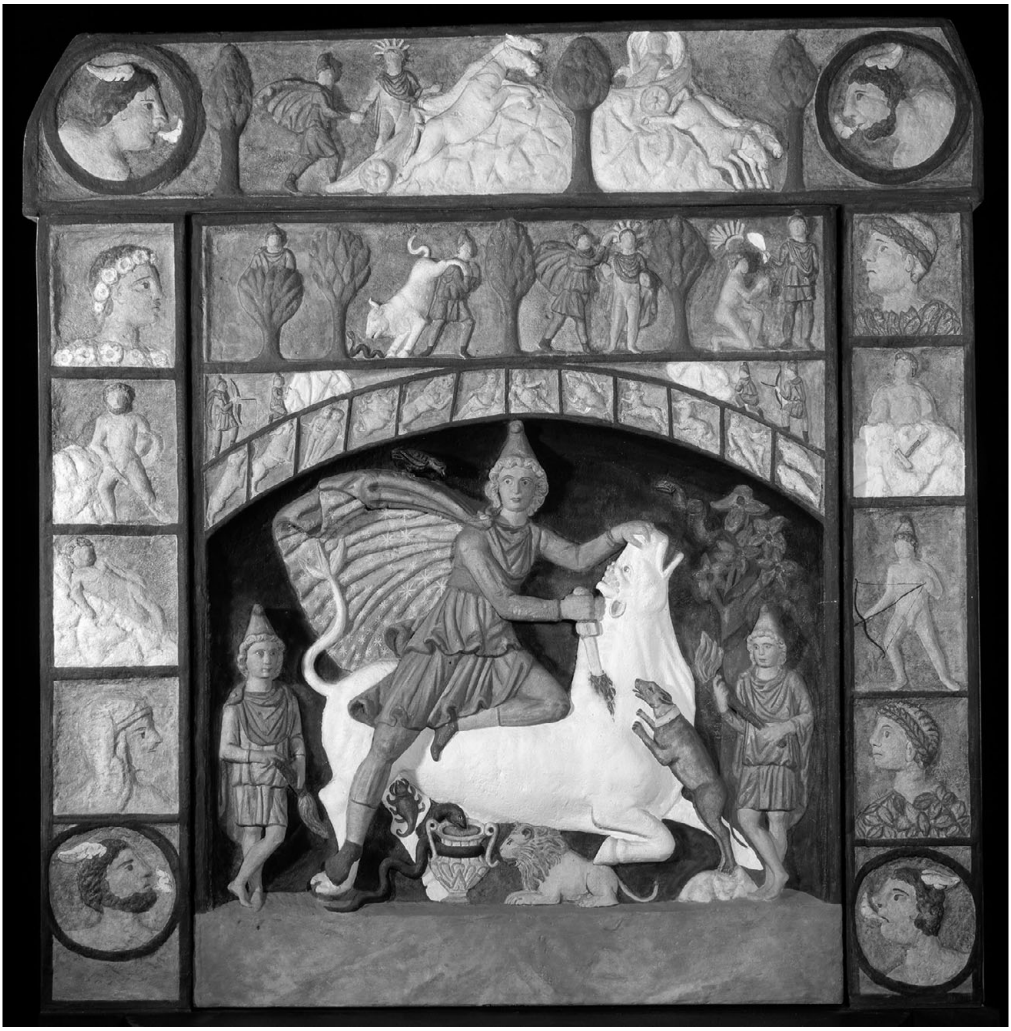
The origins of Roman Mithraism are hotly disputed. Certainly the art of the cult has nothing in common with Persian religious art or the mythology of the Near Eastern god Mitra, on whom the Roman cult was supposedly based. Mithraism in its Roman form probably appeared in Rome or Ostia in the second half of the first century AD, and was quickly transported to the Rhine and Danube frontiers via the Roman army. From here it actually spread eastward, once again likely carried by the army, to its supposed region of origin.[134]

The central room of the Mithraeum was long and thin, with the tauroctony mounted on a platform or in a niche at one end, and with dining couches or raised benches for the Mithraists lining the walls. In some instances, sacrificed animals, notably cocks, were buried in containers beneath the floor of the Mithraea in the area where the tauroctony was located. Whether this was part of a foundation ritual related to the relief, activating the image, or was relevant to the Mithraeum as a whole is uncertain.[135] Certainly the tauroctony was placed such that it was the focal point of attention within the room (see Chapter 4).

With its central position, the tauroctony gives every impression that it was the idol of the Mithraists, but its unusual design may lead us to question whether it functioned in quite the same way as the idols of public Roman temples. These images, usually relief carvings, show Mithras, dressed as a Persian with a Phrygian cap, trousers, tunic, and a cloak, pouncing upon a bull and stabbing it in the neck. The god is always surrounded by intricate details and side-figures, which vary within a known repertoire from monument to monument. One of the most celebrated examples, found in Mithraeum I at Frankfurt-Heddernheim (Roman *Nida*) in 1826, contains most of the typical elements (**Fig. 3.29**).[136]

In the center of the relief from *Nida*, Mithras is depicted in the usual way: leaping onto the bull, pulling back its head with his left hand, and plunging a dagger into its flank. Below the bull, a dog leaps up to lick at its wound, while a snake drinks from a krater on the floor, and is watched by a lion. To the right of the bull, a second snake emerges from a tree, and to the left a raven is perched upon Mithras' cloak. The tip of the dying bull's tail is transforming into ears of grain.

The colored reconstruction reproduced here not only reminds us that virtually all ancient sculpture was garishly painted, but shows the inside of Mithras' cloak painted as a blue star-filled sky, a detail found on other versions of the scene, including a fresco painted in an underground Mithraeum at San Marino, outside of Rome.[137] On a large marble tauroctony that was found



3.29 A reconstruction of the tauroctony from Mithraeum I at Frankfurt Nida, with a central rotating panel. Sandstone, 1.8 × 1.76 m (Archäologisches Museum Frankfurt)

in a Mithraeum below the church of Santo Stefano Rotondo in Rome in the early 1970s, red paint on the figures as well as gold leaf plating on the face and dagger of Mithras has survived, presumably giving the god a twinkling appearance as lamp light was reflected back to the viewer.[138] Lost on most sculptures, these painted details would have contributed considerably to the overall effect of any cult image.

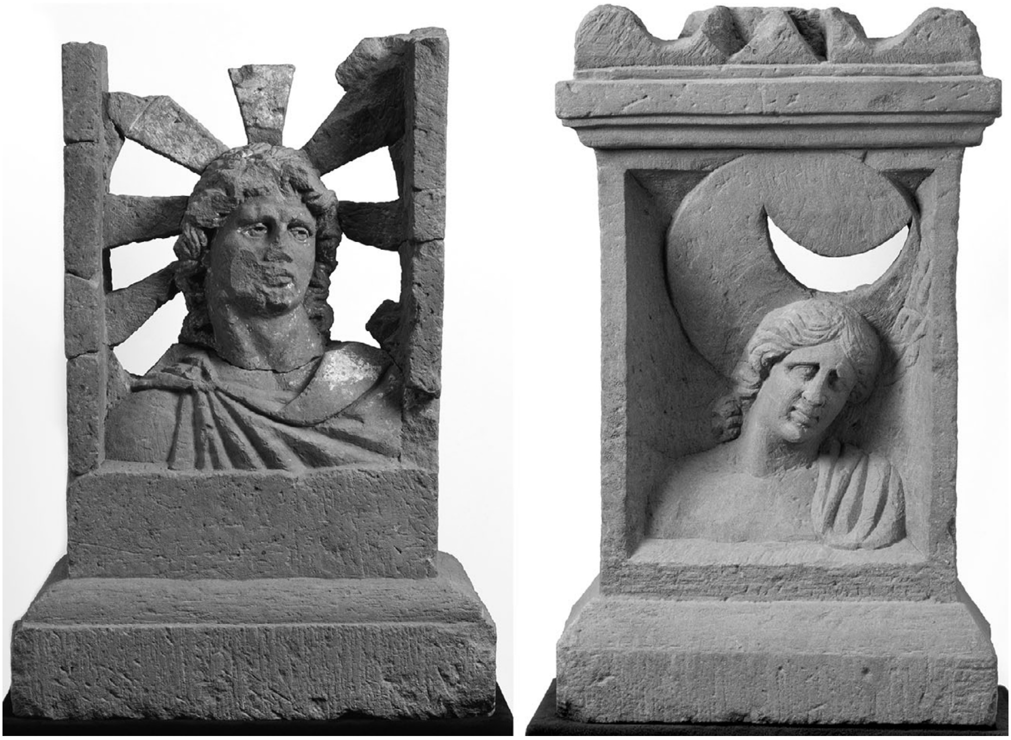
As on the Nida-Heddernheim relief, many tauroctonies include ancillary panels that tell the secondary stories of Mithras, or were surrounded by flanked by reliefs and statues that expand upon the central Mithraic bull-killing story (cp. **Fig. 6.4**), or convey further details about the biography of the god. At Nida-Heddernheim, side panels and registers show Mithras being born from a rock, sitting in a tree, carrying the bull over his shoulders, and interacting with Sol. These supplementary scenes of Mithraic art provide our clues to the mythology of the god and the beliefs of his adherents.

In other tauroctonies, rocky borders indicate that the bull-slaying is set in an underground cave, yet there are also cosmological elements to the reliefs, which include the star-filled cloak of the god. In the uppermost register at Nida, Sol and Luna appear in their chariots, and the two companions of Mithras, also wearing Persian dress, stand on either side of the bull. They are Cautes, who holds his torch upraised and represents the morning, and Cautopates, who holds his torch downward and represents the evening. Elsewhere we find depictions of a male figure with the head of a lion and a snake wrapped around his body, who is often interpreted as Aion, the god of time. At Nida, the signs of the Zodiac are carved on the curved border above the bull-slaying, as well as depictions of the four winds and four seasons on the corner panels, further adding to a sense of time and cosmic or even astronomical significance.

The Nida relief is one of a small number of tauroctonies that could be modified by rotating the central panel, which was carved on a separate slab from the outer frame, and was mounted on metal pivots at the top and bottom. By fully rotating the panel, the tauroctony was hidden, and a new scene on its reverse was made visible: Sol and Mithras banqueting together, using the body of the bull as their table. Presumably, the transformation of the tauroctony into this second image allowed the god to literally join in with the human Mithraists themselves as they partook of a ritual meal in the heart of their Mithraeum. Unlike any other idols, these tauroctonies could be modified to suit a particular ritual moment.

Some of the main elements of the tauroctony are also found as free-standing statues or separate reliefs that were placed on either side of the central cult scene. From the Mithraeum at Mundelsheim (Baden-Württemberg), we have busts of Sol and Luna carved on two separate altars that are pierced with holes (**Fig. 3.30**). When a lighted lamp was placed in a niche at the back of them, the rays of the sun and crescent moon of Luna would appear to glow.[139] In Mithraeum 3 at Frankfurt-Heddernheim, a depiction of the lion-headed god could only be viewed by looking through a narrow slit into an enclosed container that was presumably lit by a lamp.[140] As these artworks were displayed in the underground Mithraic temples, which mimicked a dark cave, such tricks with artificial light were both possible and necessary.

Unlike the Matronae reliefs, or the Jupiter columns, for which a case can be made for some kind of Iron Age predecessor, the iconography of the tauroctonies does seem to have been a Roman invention, or else its origins are totally lost to us. While the native style monuments of Gaul and Germany allowed dedicators to express their local connections and identities, the



3.30 Altars with reliefs depicting Sol and Luna and Luna from the Mithraeum at Mundelsheim. Both could be illuminated from behind such that the sun rays and moon could shine. Sandstone, H. 80 cm (Sol), H. 73 cm (Luna). (Landesmuseum Württemberg, Inv. Nos. R 89.Mun.Sol and R 89.Mun.Luna, Photo: P. Frankenstein / H. Zwietasch)

attraction of Mithraic cult images lay in their foreignness and the access to secret knowledge that they implied. For initiates, the dedication of Mithraic cult images served primarily to enhance their status amongst other initiates, who would be the main audience for these images in the private confines of the Mithraic sanctuary.

The most pressing questions about Mithraic art concern its meaning. Presumably, as initiates became more and more involved with the cult, the deeper meanings of the tauroctony and the story of Mithras was revealed to them. Unfortunately, these secrets effectively died with the cult. Since Franz Cumont published the first serious corpus of Mithraic art between 1896 and 1899, and even since a revised corpus was issued by Maarten J. Vermaseren in the middle of the twentieth century, dozens of explanations have been advanced, and none is entirely satisfactory.[141] Early attempts to reconcile the Roman divinity with the mythology of the Persian god Mitra, and to explain the tauroctony in Zoroastrian terms, as a symbol of a battle between good and evil, have been largely abandoned since the 1970s.[142] There is simply too large a gap in space and time between the Zoroastrian texts and the Roman cult. More recently, astronomical interpretations have predominated Mithraic studies, ranging from David Ulansey's popular, though now discredited, view of the tauroctony as an outdated star-map, to Roger Beck's view of the Mithraeum and tauroctony as a larger symbolic system that re-created the Mithraic cosmos and explained the initiate's place within it.[143]

The unfortunate truth is that we have no conclusive explanation of what the tauroctony, Mithraeum, and other Mithraic artworks meant to Roman Mithraists, either in terms of their mythology and beliefs. For our purposes, however, it is sufficient that the reliefs did have some kind of meaning to the initiates, and they functioned in a way that was very different from any of the other idols discussed thus far. Their form and function was a major development in Roman cult imagery, as was the manner in which they were used in cult practices.

The native and Roman style representations of divinities discussed above are relatively static representations, frontal depictions that stare out at the viewer and do little else, with attributes that serve primarily to allow the identity to be recognized. The Mithraic tauroctony, on the other hand, involves story-telling and the sort of narrative representation that is more closely related to Roman state reliefs and sarcophagi than statues carved in the round. It presents a scene of action, out of which Mithras looks from the story toward his worshipers.[144] The many details of the tauroctony invite close-up inspection, and presumably yielded new layers of meaning to those who could understand them. Tricks of light, as at Mundelsheim, or rotating reliefs, like the one at Nida-Heddernheim, added an interactive element to these idols and activities that took place inside the Mithraeum. Unlike Roman public idols, the cult images of Mithras were viewed in closed temples to which access was restricted to initiates, and which defined Mithraic sacred space.

This new format raises the question of whether the tauroctonies really functioned as idols in the same way as the images in other Roman temples. Did Mithraists perceive of them as divine, as inhabited by their god? Or were they merely a sort of artistic instruction manual used primarily to convey to the cult's secrets, or to help symbolically reconstruct the Mithraic universe within the Mithraeum? The narrative composition of the tauroctonies recalls the wall paintings, reliefs, and reredos of the Western medieval Christian churches, or the iconostasis of the later Byzantine world. Such artworks and structures were meant to be educational, teaching the Christian story, even if they sometimes seem to have become objects of Christian veneration. As with all other questions about belief, there is no definitive answer to this question about the nature of the tauroctony, and individual Mithraists and Mithraic communities may have held differing opinions themselves, but it seems to me that it is wrong to think of the tauroctony functioning purely as an educational or story-telling device.

In spite of their unusual narrative design, I would argue that the tauroctonies nonetheless were endowed with agency and a sense of divinity. Quite apart from the possible foundation deposits found below some of them, we shall see in Chapter 4 that tauroctonies were also the recipients of coins and other sacrifices, much like the idols in more conventional temples. Moreover, in the discussion of cult image destruction in Chapter 6, we will see that the tauroctony was sometimes purposefully targeted for more intensive destruction by Christians than other Mithraic cult images within the same Mithraeum. In some cases, tauroctonies were even ritually buried or hidden by Mithraists, either to protect them from such violent attentions, or to dispose of them respectfully. All of these points suggest that the reliefs held some kind of power, or had social agency, that went beyond mere instructional value or a re-telling of the Mithraic story.

Supporting the idea that the tauroctony could have divine presence, Anja Klöckner has gone so far as to suggest that the preferred choice of relief carving used for most tauroctonies was specifically intended to reduce the degree of divine power with which they might be imbued. Housed in a confined space, and in close contact with small numbers of initiates, Klöckner proposes that a sculpture in the round would have allowed too much of the divinity represented to enter the idol than was healthy or appropriate for the nearby humans. The choice of relief for the Mithraic idol reduced its divine presence to manageable levels.[145] Of course, some Mithraea did have tauroctonies carved in the round, but certainly the outward look of the god toward his worshipers, the rotating reliefs that allowed Mithras to literally join in the banquets of his followers, and the various tricks of lighting that Mithraic art employed, all speak to a much more direct form of interaction between artworks and worshipers. It is easy to see how this might be unnerving to those who accept a real diving presence in images of the gods, and were more accustomed to the static representations.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION: THE ONGOING AND VARIED CHRONOLOGY OF CULT IMAGE BIRTHS

The conclusion of the previous chapter, that figural representations of the gods had existed in the Celtic and Germanic worlds long before the arrival of the Romans, has profound consequences for our understanding of the development of cult images in the Roman period. In the decades that followed the Roman conquest, the very same idols that had been worshiped in the Iron Age, which were mostly made of wood, continued to be venerated. Over the centuries, new generations of cult images and idols appeared, some adopting entirely Roman iconographic forms, others taking shapes that were derived from their Iron Age prototypes.

The Romans certainly brought new artistic styles and iconography to Gaul and Germany, but their most important introduction was the tradition of ordinary people dedicating votive statues and reliefs, as well as new stone temples for housing idols. The vow, a particularly Roman method of introducing new cult images, may be one reason that canonical Roman iconographic forms automatically replaced native ones, and the mechanism through which new combined iconographies developed. As new generations of votive monuments appeared, they naturally copied one another and picked up elements of contemporary art.

When "native" types of divine representation appeared in Roman media, that is in stone and on votive altars and reliefs, they naturally adopted Roman stylistic conventions, while relying on Iron Age art for their basic forms and iconography. New idols and cult images were being born all the time, and by the second and third centuries AD they had developed forms that were quite distant from their Iron Age roots. Only a few representations of native divinities, like the Cernunnos and other seated divinities, still closely resembled the Iron Age cult images on which they were based. Monuments like the Jupiter columns, on the other hand, had evolved a long way from their pre-Roman prototypes. They bore canonically Roman divinities in relief, but their overall form was adapted from a lost native monument type, and the representation of Jupiter that stood on top of them combined Roman and elements of native iconography.

If we accept that there were wooden cult images prior to the Roman conquest, as well as in the years that followed it, the problem of the apparently late birth of native iconography becomes far less complicated. There is no need to resort to the theory of a second century Celtic renaissance, to imagine a forceful imperialistic take-over of local cults, or to understand native religious art as an expression of resistance to Roman rule, or even as an assertions of local identity in the face of an increasingly global world. All of these factors may have played a role in the choice to create an image of a native divinity, but they did not generate the iconography of the images themselves. That basic iconography was already well established, and was visible in the many older monuments that still sat around in Roman temples.

In general, we have more images of native divinities from second and third centuries AD simply because there are more stone monuments and inscriptions from this period as a whole. This is in part due to the prosperity of later provincial society, but also because it would have been unthinkable at this stage to revert to a wooden statue or a representation in an Iron Age style. Stone sculpture had become the accepted norm for cult images, as had a Roman style of representation, and even Roman iconography. Some hundreds of years earlier in Rome, Greek style statues in bronze, marble and other precious materials had swept away the old Italic cult images of wood and clay in much the same manner.

The most striking innovation of the imperial period, for which no such natural development can be identified, is the appearance of the new style images of mystery cults, notably, those of Mithras. These cults were centered on a new type of idol, which offered a visual narrative that was quite different from the static representations of traditional temples. Perhaps one of the major attractions of the cult was the novel way in which its idols interacted closely with worshipers.

The history of Roman imperial period idols and cult images was one of multiple births at different periods, as well as one of continuity with the past. At any given time, temples in both the city of Rome and her provinces would have contained a mixture of older and newer cult images, including both idols and votive dedications. As worshipers left votive offerings in the form of sculptures at temples that increasingly corresponded to the artistic tastes of the day, some of their dedications could have exceeded the size, artistic quality, and overall impressiveness of the aging wooden or terracotta idol that the temple housed. As such, the newer dedications would naturally become the recipients of more attention and perhaps eventually worship by temple visitors. This sort of competition amongst images provided yet another impetus for the changing forms of successive generations of cult images and idols.

With temples containing such an array of older and newer cult images, how are we to distinguish between those that were worshiped, and those that were not? Information on their consecrated status would be helpful, but of course we do not have it, and have explored instead the question of when particular types of cult image began to appear. For archaeological clues to answer the question of status we must look elsewhere. In the next two chapters, we will turn to this issue of idols as functional objects, considering first how their staging in temples and their interactions with worshipers distinguished them from other cult images.

FOUR

IDOLS AT HOME

INTRODUCTION: IDOL SETTING AND THE TEMPLE EXPERIENCE

Images of the gods were produced continuously in the Iron Age and throughout the Roman period, but so far we have not really been able to distinguish between general cult images and idols, at least as far as individual statues are concerned. The distinction is intrinsically difficult to make, since it was context, both social and physical, that distinguished idols from other cult images. Moreover, the multiple births of cult images over time meant that different types of cult image were present simultaneously in the temples of the Roman Empire at any given time, ranging from crude wooden carvings to elaborate bronze and chryselephantine (ivory and gold) statues. The most valuable and visually impressive statue found at a temple site need not necessarily have been considered an idol, as site reports often claim, since votive offerings could easily exceed a temple's original idol in size, artistic quality, and cost of materials. So how are we to distinguish between the two categories in practice? The solution is to look to the primary setting in which Romans encountered idols and cult images – the temple.

Though we cannot easily reconstruct an idol's social context, we can address the physical context in which it was housed. The Latin word for a building housing an idol was *aedes*. The very same word was used by both Livy and Vitruvius to describe both domestic houses and temples, implying that the gods lived in their own houses amongst humans. The word Latin *templum,* could also refer to the building housing an idol, but strictly speaking denoted the space in which augury could be conducted. Its English derivative, "temple," however, commonly refers to the structure housing an idol, i.e. the *aedes*, and it is in this sense that the term is used here.[1]

The Roman concept of the temple as a home for the gods was more than just a linguistic coincidence. Cicero describes the Capitoline temple as Jupiter's earthly home, and even before Veii was sacked and Juno Regina was carried willingly to Rome, Livy tells how the gods of that city looked with greedy eyes to the new homes (*novas sedes*) that had been promised for them in Rome.[2] When Pompey entered the holy of holies of the great Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, he instinctively expected to find a statue or aniconic idol residing there.[3] It was primarily in temples that the Romans encountered idols, though some, like rustic *priapi* and statues of Diana, or the Jupiter columns of the provinces, stood in the open air. If temples were conceptually the homes of the gods, then we should expect their idols to have occupied in the most prominent and auspicious spot within them.

Textual evidence for the physical place of Roman idols and cult images is virtually non-existent, and is vastly outweighed by descriptions artworks in or near temples.[4] For example, we know that after the Augustan period, the Temple of Concord, its porticus, and enclosure contained statues by Greek artists depicting Apollo, Juno, Latona nursing Apollo and Diana, Aesculpaius, Hygeia, Mars Mercury, Ceres Jupiter Minerva, Marsyas, Liber Pater, Cassandra, and Vesta, in addition to a statue of Antony and four elephants made of obsidian.[5] But no ancient testimony describes the idol of Concordia herself. Were it not for some coins issued by Hadrian and the third century empress Orbiana, we should have no idea whatsoever as to what the statue of Concordia looked like.[6]

The idol of Concordia may simply have been so outshone by the many artworks surrounding it that it attracted no comment. But as Richard Jenkyns notes, the presence of an idol was something of a given for the Romans in any temple, so much so that comment on it was simply not necessary: "The important thing, perhaps, was to be in the presence of the god, not to study him. When we go to see friends, we probably do not gaze at them, and may hardly think of them in visual terms at all; what matters to us is to be in their company. If we think of a Roman temple as the house of a god, the place where he resides, it is easier to think of a visit to his *aedes* as this kind of seeing: as a meeting rather than a stare."[7] But this is not to say that visuality was unimportant. The idol, and thus the god, needed to be present both to see and to be seen.

The visual link between worshipers and idols, as well as idols and their surroundings, was an important consideration in temple planning and architecture. Vitruvius' handbook on architecture advised that the temples of the gods be placed in appropriate places. The Capitoline temple of a city should be placed on a platform high enough that Jupiter could oversee the walls of the city he protects, while temples of Apollo and Bacchus belong near theaters and temples to Mercury in the forum or the marketplace.[8] The gods were housed where they could be close to those human activities that most interested them. Vitruvius further ordained that temple buildings should be oriented such that their statues looked to the west, appearing to rise out of the east with the sun to those worshipers sacrificing or bringing offerings to their altars.[9] Where this was not possible, temples were to be oriented so that the widest possible view of the city was available to the gods, or the doors of temples should face riverbanks or roadways, to allow passers-by a view of the gods and to pay them reverence face-to-face.[10]

The requirements of Vitruvius imply a visual relationship between humans and idols that was two-way. It was important both that the gods were seen by their worshipers, but also that the gods could look back at them. The relationship was an ancient Western equivalent to the Hindu concept of *darshan*, discussed in the introduction, in which seeing and being seen by idols is the critical part of worship. We will find this need accommodated in the placement of idols in Roman temples. This chapter focuses on idols in their homes, and the next on interactions with them. Since textual descriptions of idol placement are so limited, we are dealing largely with archaeological evidence.

In the introduction of this book, I noted how the placement of ancient cult images in the sterile settings of modern museums has generated the "museum effect" in which ancient religious art is considered primarily in terms of styles, iconographic patterns, and is assigned semiotic meanings, but is subsequently left devoid of its original contextual meaning. This art historical approach is only one mode of viewing statues, a mode that even the Romans themselves employed when they looked at the Greek sculptures such as those displayed in the Temple of Concordia. But when they looked at idols, their mode of viewing was very different, which in part explains the lack of detailed descriptions. Visual encounters with idols belong to what Jas Elsner has termed "ritual centered viewing" in which the object's divine nature superseded its historical or artistic aspects.[11] Though we cannot see through Roman eyes in this way, we can attempt to reconstruct and re-imagine the original settings of idols, and so aim to recreate the "temple effect" in which such ritual centered viewing occurred.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FOR IDOL PLACEMENT

In Rome and Italy, there is very little archaeological evidence available for the placement of cult images inside Roman temples. This is because the layout of the Roman podium temple was such that the floors of interior rooms were situated well above the outside ground level. The flooring and immobile furniture, including statue bases, were easily stripped away when the temples were plundered for building material in post-antique periods. Moreover, many important temple sites in Rome and Italy were excavated in periods when archaeological recording was minimal, and scholarly attention has often focused instead on their external architecture, which can be reconstructed from fragments of columns and sculpted architectural decoration. In Italy, we possess only a handful of temples where there is good evidence for idol placement in the form of a preserved base or some other arrangement inside the cella.

It is usually assumed that idols were displayed in the back of the cella in podium temples, being placed directly against the rear wall of the temple, or in its apse if one was present.[12] Some idols were mounted on large stage-like bases, the size and position of which must have determined where viewers stood inside the cella to see the statue. In Italy, we have the base of a colossal statue of Fortuna Huisce Diei in the circular temple B of the Area Sacra di Largo Argentina in Rome, a square base against the rear wall of the Temple of Hercules in Ostia, as well as bases in the Temple of Apollo in Pompeii, and the Temple of Dionysos/Liber at Sant' Abbondio, just outside of Pompeii.[13] In each case, altars stood outside the main entrance to the temple, aligned with the main door and the base of the idol. In the Temple of Apollo at Pompeii, visitors were evidently meant to stand on a rectangular mosaic floor set directly in front of the statue base, a simple means of dividing space that can only be found in Greek temple interiors.[14]

In the Temple of Hercules at Alba Fucens, and in the recently published Temple of the Dioscurii at Cori (Latium), the floors of the cellae were well preserved, but lacked any trace of permanent statue bases. Their idols must have stood on very low bases placed directly on top of the interior mosaic floors, with a baldachin or aediculum framing the space above them. Henner von Hesberg has suggested this arrangement was a Hellenistic development in the staging of idols, and if so, then it was one fitting to the more dramatic and emotional style of Hellenistic art, with the gods literally sharing the same floor as the viewers, and walking on the same mosaic floors as mere mortals inside their homes.[15] On a more practical level, the lightness of bronze or acrolithic statues, or a preference for smaller idols that could be carried in processions, may also explain the absence of substantial bases in these temples. The paucity of podium temples in Italy with evidence of this sort certainly makes it difficult to evaluate the meaning of such variations inside the cella, and the question of staging should be considered together with evidence from non-podium style sacred buildings in Italy and the provinces to obtain a more complete picture.[16]

In Gaul and Germany, the most common temple type was the Romano-Celtic temple, which was not normally built on a raised platform but had internal floors at or near ground level. When these temples were abandoned or fell into ruin, overgrowth and layers of soil quickly built up, protecting ancient surfaces from both scavengers and the ravages of time. By that point, most of these temples had already been plundered, destroyed, or partially dismantled in late antiquity, but the overall effect was not as severe as with the podium temples of Rome and the Mediterranean world. At a number of Romano-Celtic sites in Gaul and Germany, the bases upon which cult images and idols once stood have survived, and in a few rare instances idols and cult images have been recovered almost *in situ* (see **Table 3** in Chapter 2).

The same point is true of Mithraic temples across the whole Roman Empire. Whereas Romano-Celtic temples were at ground level, the interiors of Mithraea were actually set below it, and were thus even more easily buried and protected from post-antique processes of plundering. In Germany, many well-preserved Mithraea have been found in the territory between the Rhine River and the *limes*, the region known as the *agri decumates*, which was abandoned by the Roman government in the late third century AD. We will return to the reasons for this in Chapter 6. A very brief consideration of the place of the Mithraic idol, the tauroctony, is presented here to show how differently these idols functioned in comparison to those housed in Romano-Celtic temples.

Though the archaeological evidence for idol and cult statue placement in the western provinces seems abundant, a note of caution must also be added. The sites discussed here still represent only a tiny proportion of a much larger whole for which we mostly have no evidence about idol or cult image placement. This is, in part, due to the chances of survival, since some temple floors were completely robbed out, but is also a result of the fact that not all idols needed a substantial and durable foundation. We may assume the surviving information represents the norm, but we cannot be certain.

Given the paucity of evidence for Rome and Italy, this chapter looks to the sites of Gaul and Germany, focusing largely on the Romano-Celtic temple complexes. Lest this seem an overly specialized temple type, it should be remembered that for the inhabitants of Rome's western provinces such temples were more normal than the podium-style temples. It was in Romano-Celtic temples that a very large part of the Roman Empire's population met with their idols and thus interacted with their gods. The discussion of Romano-Celtic temples is followed by the evidence from Mithraea, the settings of outdoor idols, and a comparison to the placement of sculptural votive offerings within temple enclosures.

The Romano-Celtic Temple

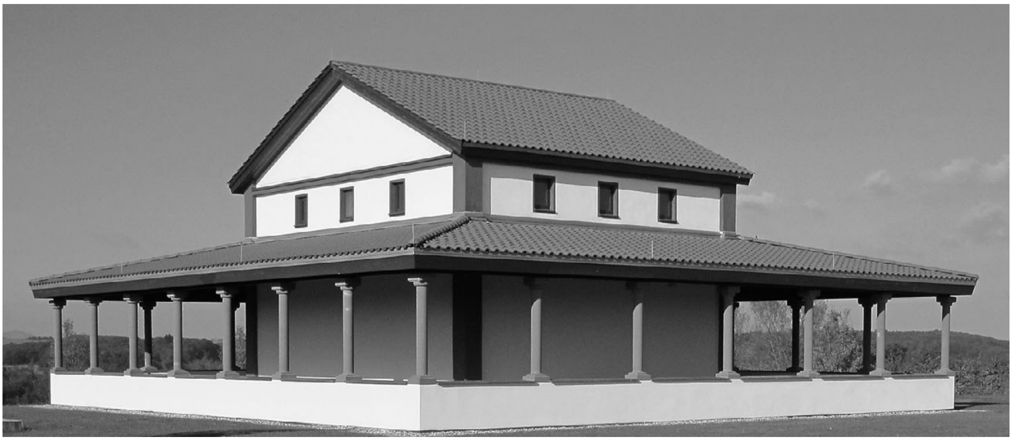
The sacred landscape of the western provinces of the Roman Empire is dominated by variations on a particular type of temple building, referred to in English archaeological literature as the Romano-Celtic or Gallo-Roman temple. Nearly 1,000 Romano-Celtic sanctuary sites have been recorded in Gaul alone, appearing in rural sanctuaries, on villa properties, as well as in towns and cities. Podium style temples in the western provinces, on the other hand, are usually limited to major cities.[17]

Just as it is now often supposed that there were no anthropomorphic cult images in the Iron Age, it was once widely assumed that the Celts and Germans lacked temple buildings and worshiped exclusively outdoors in natural settings.[18] Archaeological discoveries of the past fifty years, however, have shown that the Romano-Celtic temple was a direct descendant of Iron Age ritual enclosures, and the atectonic theory of pre-Roman religion has long since been proved false. The Romano-Celtic temples, best known as Roman period stone buildings, were adaptations of wooden Celtic temples, as continuity of form and occupation at several sites demonstrate.[19]

The historical development of the Romano-Celtic temple is usually described in relation to discoveries made at Gournay-sur-Aronde in the 1980s.[20] The main complication here, and at other Romano-Celtic temple sites, is the fact that Roman period buildings have often entirely destroyed or obscured traces of earlier wooden structures, even at sites where the presence of Iron Age artefacts confirms a pre-Roman occupation. When detectable, Iron Age post-holes and ditches often follow the same alignments of later Roman buildings and walls, thus proving continuity not just of occupation, but also of the form of buildings and of the layout of these sites.

The temples were themselves part of larger enclosures, or sanctuaries, which could include several temples as well as other functional buildings and features. The Iron Age ritual enclosures at Vix and the Glauberg, discussed in Chapter 2, where ditches demarcated a rectangular area in which images of divinized ancestors were displayed, belong to the earliest forerunners of the Romano-Celtic sanctuary complex. At Gournay, a ditched enclosure contained a simple wooden structure that covered a central pit and was modified over time. Pits and ditches at Gournay and other temple sites are usually filled with offerings of coins, jewelry, and weapons as well as animal and human sacrifices.[21]

From the late first century BC to the end of the first century AD, most Romano-Celtic sanctuaries underwent significant changes. Iron Age square and rectangular wooden buildings were replaced by half-timber structures that formed the cellae of the Roman period temples in which idols were housed. By the mid-first century AD, galleries appear around many of these cellae, finalizing the best known form of the Romano-Celtic temple: a tower-like cella surrounded by a gallery (**Fig. 4.1**). It is a matter of some debate whether these galleries were inspired by pre-Roman architecture or were an invention of the imperial era, but they were probably meant to accommodate a Celtic rite of circumambulation around the cella and the holy object it contained.[22] There are many variations on the general layout of the Romano-Celtic temple, such as circular or octagonal cellae, as well as cellae with porches

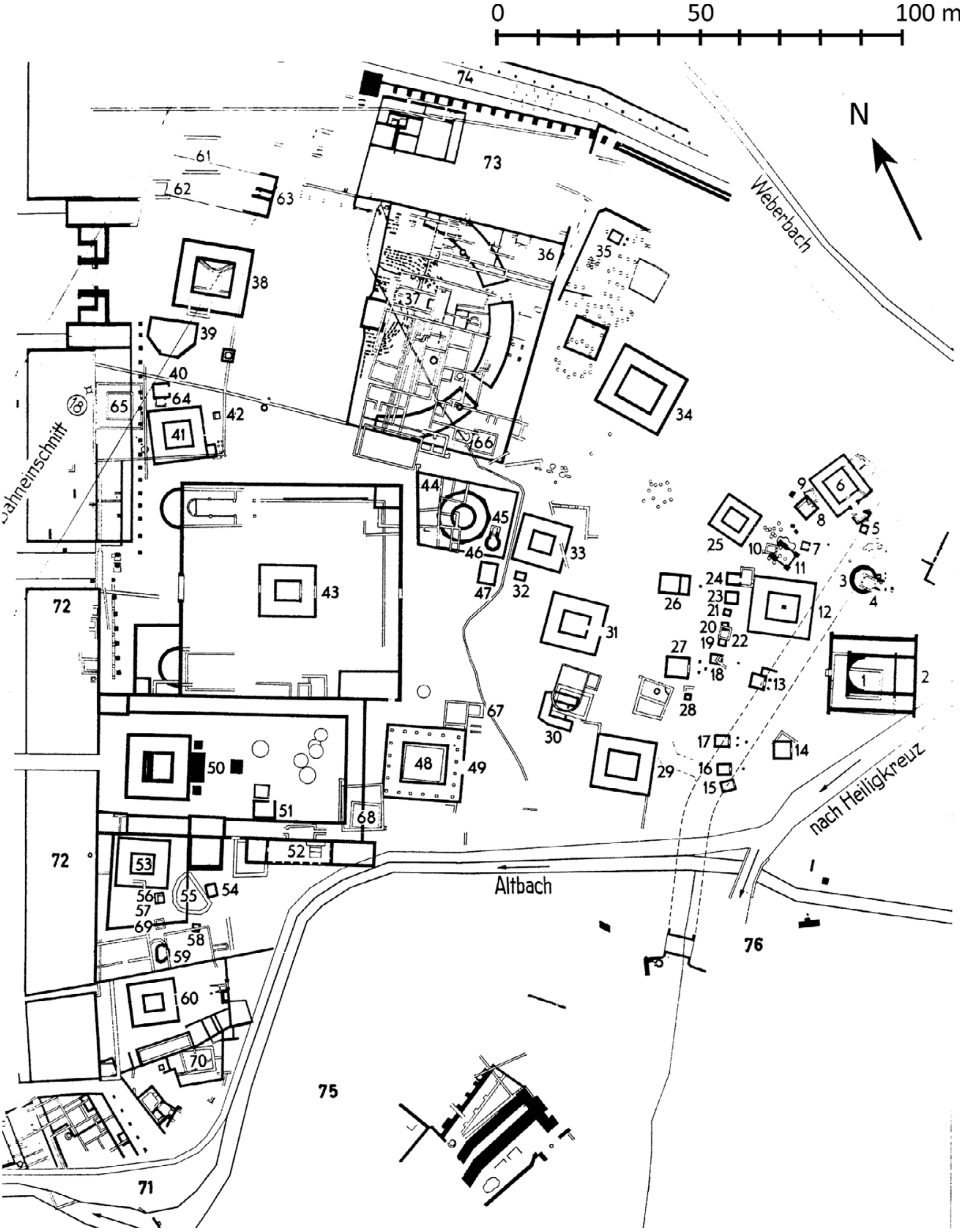


4.1 A reconstructed Romano-Celtic temple with open gallery at the Martberg, Pommern. (Author)

and podia, but the simple cella without a gallery remained the most common variant throughout the imperial period.[23]

In the second century AD, major renovations occurred at many Romano-Celtic temple sites, with half-timber structures being replaced by stone or brick walls. The interior of the cellae often received a cement floor, and additional temples or supporting buildings were constructed in the enclosures. These renovations correspond to a marked increase in inscribed monumental dedications such as altars and statues, and both phenomena can be linked to increased provincial wealth and building activity in the profane sector. At this point, a new form of local euergetism had emerged, in which the wealthy elites of western provincial society sought to express and distinguish themselves in Roman terms through dedications and building projects.[24]

The wooden walls and ditches that had surrounded Iron Age ritual enclosures were also re-built in stone in the Roman period, usually following the same layout as their Iron Age predecessors. In some cases, space within the enclosure does not seem to have been strictly organized, but temples, large and small, as well as votive monuments, altars, and other structures fill the area in no particular order. At these sites, of which Trier Altbachtal (**Fig. 4.2**) is a good example, no single building can be identified as the central temple of the enclosure, but rather the overall impression is one of natural growth and crowding, with new buildings competing for pride of place.[25] Elsewhere, a clear division of sacred and profane space can be observed within the enclosure, but not a uniform plan. At Thun-Allmendingen (**Fig. 4.3**) or at Hochscheid, baths, hostels, and other functional buildings occupied one side of the enclosure, while the temple buildings were situated on the other.[26] Finally, at some sites like Sanxay (Vienne) or Puy Lautard (Creuse, **Fig. 4.14**) the sanctuary followed a co-ordinated monumental plan in which one or more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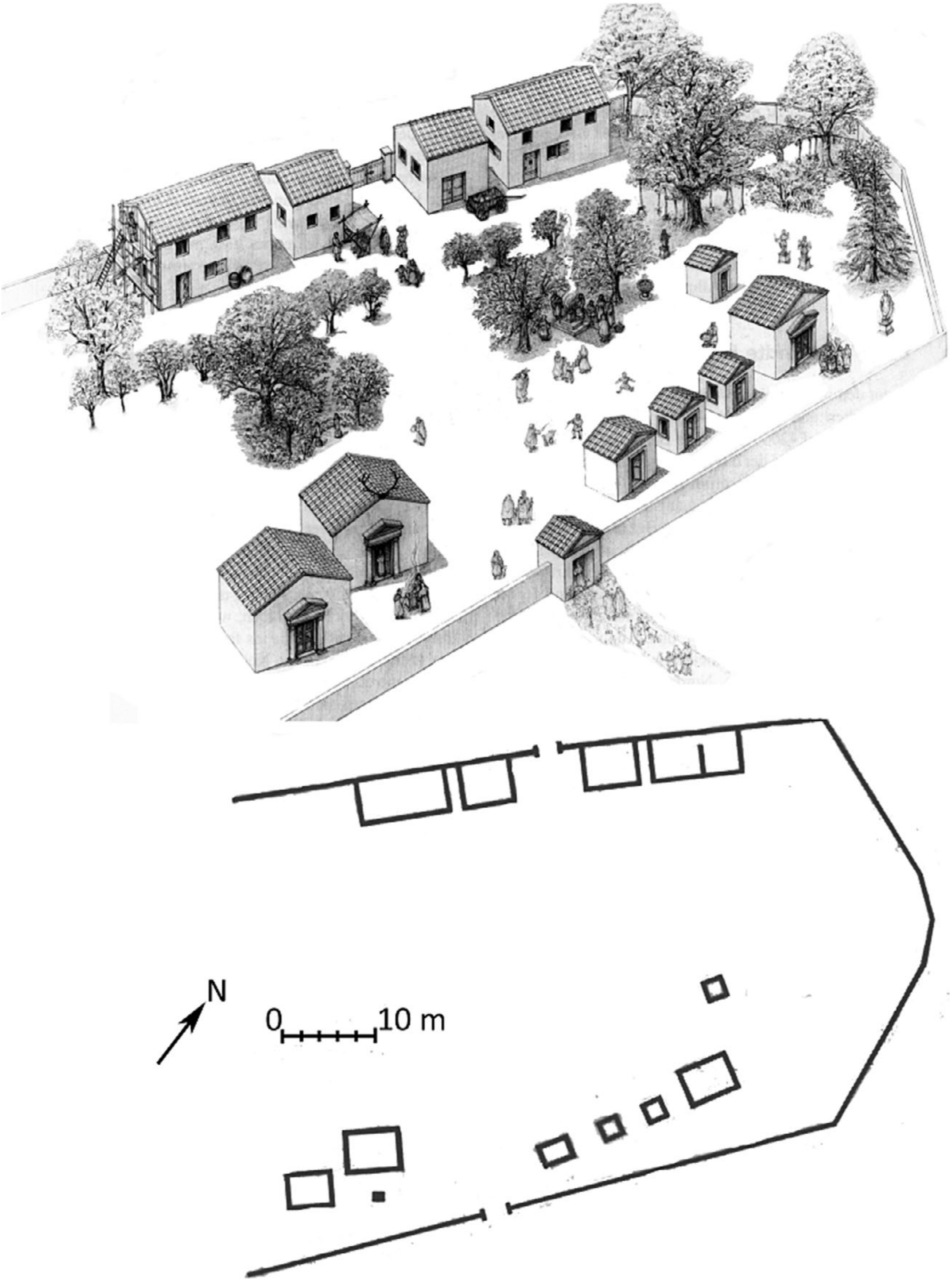
4.2 Trier Altbachtal sanctuary complex with no clear organization of space. The plan shows all periods of the site. (After Gose 1972, fig. Z3)

temples were carefully centered inside monumental enclosure walls.[27] Many sanctuary complexes were connected to or associated with a large bath and theater, suggesting that these sites saw periods of intermittent and intensive use at specific times in addition to a regular traffic of visitors or pilgrims.[28]



4.3 The Thun-Allmendingen sanctuary, with temples lining the south side of the enclosure, and profane buildings grouped to the north against the temenos wall. (After Martin-Kilcher et al. 2009, fig. 6/10)

Each of these phases in the development of a sanctuary site would have affected how idols and cult images were positioned, housed, and how they could be approached by worshipers. In the Iron Age, the central pit of enclosures, sometimes termed the *autel souterrain* ("underground altar") in French archaeological literature, was the focus of most ritual.[29] Roman period cellae are often built directly over these Iron Age pits, which were filled in when the cellae were floored. It is often assumed that at this point idols replaced the pits as the focal point of worship. But why were these pits be so callously covered in the Roman period if they were of such great importance? Perhaps it was not so much the pits, but the wooden idols that presided over them that were the center of ritual attention, with the pits serving as containers for offerings. These idols remained in the cellae in the Roman period, and stone altars were placed outside of the temple structure to accommodate forms of worship. Thus the filling of these pits was an upgrade in the divinity's place of residence and in the forms of its worship rather than a result of the introduction of images of the gods.

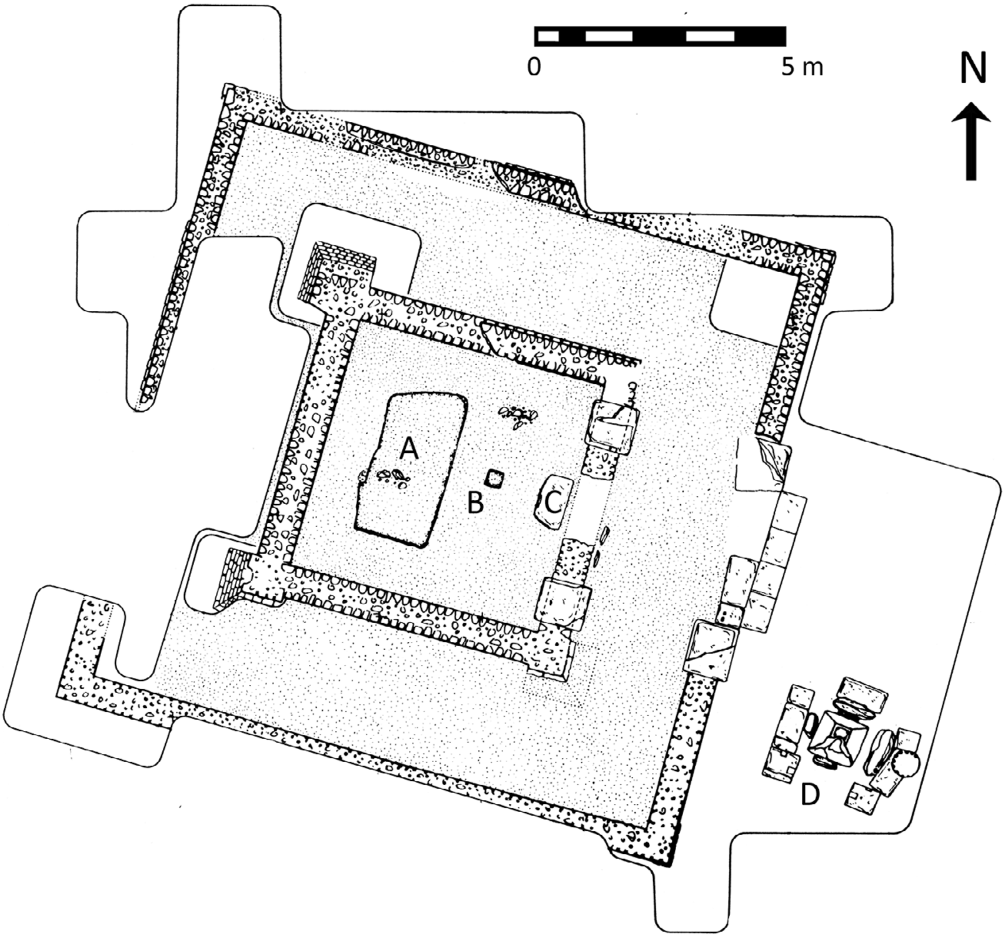
A further connection to the pre-Roman past can be seen in the fact that some Romano-Celtic temples were constructed directly on top of pre-Roman and early Roman burials, or stood in some sort of spatial relationship to tumuli.[30] At Folly Lane, in Britain, and at Avenches En Chaplix, Switzerland, the cellae of Romano-Celtic temples rested directly above late Iron Age or early Roman cremation burials.[31] At Crevans (Haute-Saône), a simple cella with a porch was built directly on top of a pit containing Iron Age material and just in front of a rectangular enclosure of the La Tène period comparable to those at Vix and the Glauberg.[32] Some second century Romano-Celtic temples sites, such as Newel and Bancroft, were built in Roman cemeteries.[33]

These temples with funerary connections support the proposal made long ago by Jullian and Grenier, and recently revisited by Forcey and Aupert, that some Romano-Celtic temple sites began as the tombs of venerable ancestors and developed into a form of hero cult.[34] Since many of the Iron Age cult images seen Chapter 2 were representations of divinized ancestors, this hypothesis is of obvious significance for Roman period idols. It raises again the possibility that Iron Age cult images remained the focus of religious attention well into the Roman period, even if that attention even if they were interpreted differently.

It is in a small number of Romano-Celtic temples that we have unparalleled evidence for the physical context of Roman idols, and we will look at four of these sites in detail here. **Table 4**, located in the Appendix, lists 17 temple buildings where such evidence exists, and will be referred to here and in the next chapter. This selection of sites should by no means be seen as comprehensive, but is sufficient to illustrate the place of idols in their homes. In each case, we find that temples and sacred structures were constructed around and emphasized a single place in which the idol was stored and displayed.

Crain (Yonne)

The temple at Crain (Yonne) (**Table 4.7**, Fig. 4.4), which was built in the second century AD provides a good point of departure for this discussion.[35] We do not know if the site was occupied before its second century phase, but the temple remained in use in this form until the late fourth century. The site was excavated as part of a limited rescue excavation in 1971, and so we have no information about the surrounding enclosure wall or possible related



4.4 Plan of the cella at Crain, showing the imprint of the idol base (A), a smaller impression possibly for an offering table (B), floor plate of the original floor (C), and a thesaurus for accepting coin offerings (D). The solid lines denote the extent of the excavation or trenches. (Revised from Devauges 1973, fig. 2, original drawn by A. Olivier and J. Gauther) structures. The temple building follows the usual plan of a Romano-Celtic temple, with a gallery surrounding a cella. Reinforced brick foundations at the corners of the cella suggest that there were two rows of large windows in the cella walls, probably both at the level of the gallery and above it, with the weight of the walls and roof being pushed down to the corners of the building. The windows at the lower level would have allowed the interior to be viewed by worshipers in the gallery. In the so-called Temple of Janus at Autun (Sâone-et-Loire), where three walls of a cella are preserved almost to their original height, just such a row of gallery level windows was cut into the cella walls at a later stage of renovation.[36] Most importantly at Crain, the site produced evidence for the idol's pedestal, and possible fragments of the idol itself.

Like most Roman sites in Western Europe, the temple at Crain was plundered for building material in a post-antique period, and most of the paving stones of its interior floor were taken. Only a single paving slab was found still embedded in the mortar subfloor of the cella's interior, just in front of the door (**Fig. 4.4C**). In this same mortar subfloor, toward the west side of the cella interior, was a 3.0 × 1.5 m depression of 7–8 cm in depth (**Fig. 4.4A**). This rectangular feature corresponds to the base on which the temple's idol once stood. Another smaller impression (30 × 30 cm, 15 cm deep) directly in front of the podium was presumably for some smaller but equally permanent feature, perhaps a small altar, tripod, or offering table (**Fig. 4.4B**).

Similar impressions of idol bases in mortar floors have been recorded at Harfleur (**Table 4.8**) and Mouzon (**Table 4.12**). Though such impressions provide no clue to the height of the statue base, they do suggest its size and position. Moreover, it is significant that these pedestals were in place before the mortar subfloor and paving of the cella were built around them. Either the bases were part of earlier structures around which new temples were built or renovated, which seems unlikely at Crain, or they were added in a phase of construction before the mortar floors. In either case, the size and placement of the idol was known and the entire construction plan of the temple was determined by it. These idol bases were immovable permanent features of these buildings, and certainly formed the most dominant feature of the cella's interior.

Both the larger and smaller impression at Crain were aligned on a single axis with the cella and gallery doors, the thresholds of which were located on the southeastern side of the cella. Markings in the thresholds show that both the gallery and the cella had double doors that opened inward, almost corresponding perfectly to the width of the base inside the cella (2.70 m and 2.78 m). We know nothing of the height of the doors, but the use of large stone blocks as lintels suggests that they were substantial. When both were open, the idol would certainly have been visible to those standing in front of the gallery doors for some distance.

The fact that the gallery itself had a door at all is significant, since the galleries of Romano-Celtic temples are often reconstructed as being open to the outside, with columns and low walls supporting the roof of the gallery (e.g. as in **Fig. 4.1**). The substantial arrangements for gallery doors at Crain, however, suggest more than just a waist-high gate in a low wall. If they were full-sized doors, then the gallery walls of this temple certainly extended to the gallery's roof. With no possibility for admitting light through windows at the ground level, windows would have been needed in upper cella walls, and this may explain the reinforced corners of the structure. Natural light would have filtered down from well above the idol, which, as suggested earlier, could be seen by worshipers perambulating in the dark and fully enclosed gallery.

Two sets of doors would have allowed access to both the gallery and the cella at Crain to be controlled. To the left of the gallery entrance, the excavators found a stone money box (*thesaurus*) into which temple visitors could drop coins (**Fig. 4.4D**).[37] Perhaps it was customary to pay admission to obtain entrance to the gallery and view the idol up close. No trace of an altar or foundation for an altar was found in front of the temple, but this may be due to the limited extent of the rescue excavation. As we shall see later on, altars and other cult images were often moved or removed, and in late antiquity became the focus of Christian attacks on the hated pagan religion. Later still, the square format of some cult monuments such as altars, bases, and *Viergöttersteine* became attractive spolia for re-use in construction.

Amongst pieces of sculpted architectural elements found at Crain were fragments of a colossal statue in white limestone scattered in the debris around the base's impression.[38] These included a large piece of draped torso, two sandaled feet and a big toe, a leg, two hands, fragments of a spear, and the upper part of a head, consisting of the left eye and strands of hair and with traces of red paint on it.[39] The hair is modeled in twisted strands pulled back from the face, with deeply drilled grooves. The iris of the preserved eye is clearly demarcated with the drill, with a deep curve cut into its lower half. Both traits are suggestive of late second century date for the colossus, but since the statue had been deliberately smashed into small pieces in late antiquity, it is too fragmentary for its subject to be identified.[40] The large size of the base, however, was certainly sufficient to support such a colossal figure, suggesting that these are indeed pieces of the idol that once resided in the cella at Crain, and that could be glimpsed through its doors and windows.

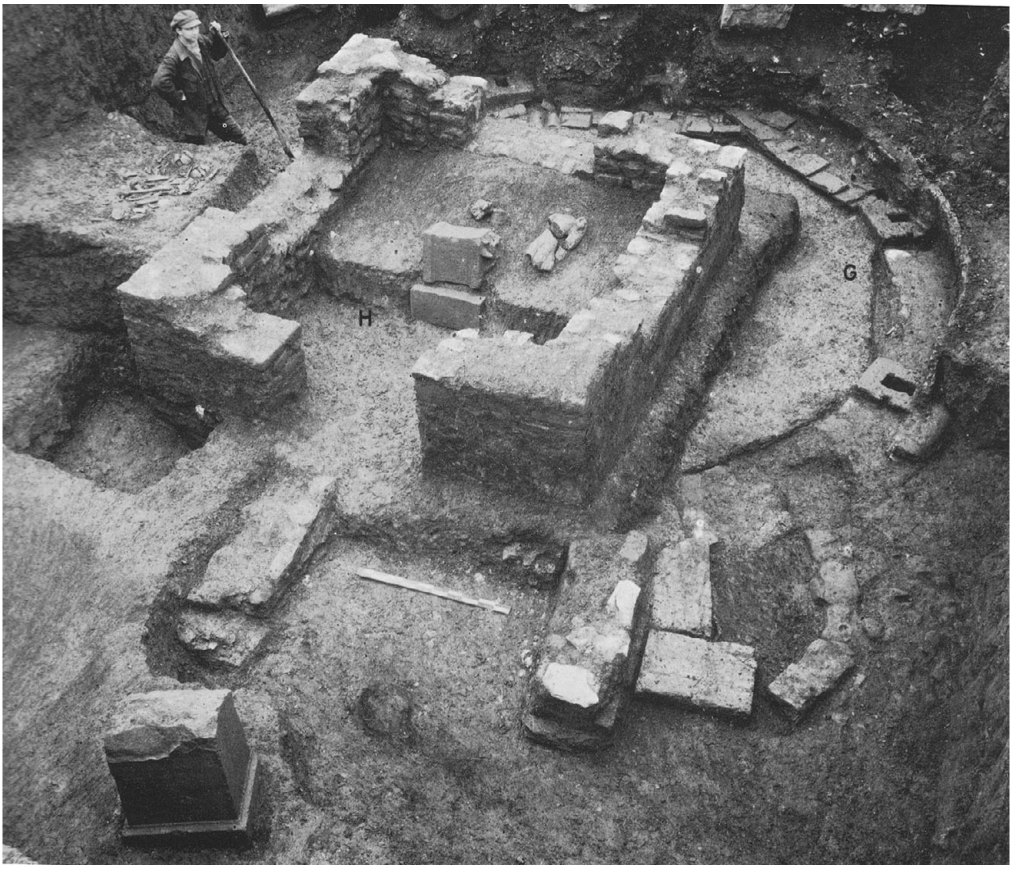
Three Temples at Trier-Altbachtal: The Mercury Temple, Stierkapelle, and a Romano-Celtic Temple with Gallery

From the single temple at Crain we may turn to the massive temple complex at Trier Altbachtal (**Fig. 4.2**) that was excavated between 1926 and 1934 as part of a German government program to provide work for the unemployed. The site produced more than seventy cult buildings, including Romano-Celtic temples with galleries and simple cellae, a theater, houses, and an enormous collection of sculpture and inscriptions. In fact, the sculptural finds from Altbachtal represent the largest known collection of cult images from a single site in the Roman world. The site's many structures were fully studied, numbered, and published on the basis of the excavation notes of Erich Gose in 1972. Occupied from the Iron Age right down to the early Frankish period, the area was re-terraced and renovated numerous times in antiquity before it was buried in layers, sometimes as much as 5 m deep, of fluvial mud. These processes sealed evidence for the original placement of idols in three temples (**Table 4.2–4**), and of other cult images in two instances (**Table 4.1** and **4.3**).[41]

The earliest Roman temples at Altbachtal appeared in the Augustan period, and would have been simple wooden constructions. These were replaced by stone buildings in a monumentalizing phase in the second half of the second century. In the late third century, traditionally around 275, numerous renovations and rebuilding efforts took place at Altbachtal, probably because the sanctuary complex had been damaged along with the entire city of Trier either by Germanic incursions or by the civil strife that characterized the last decades of the third century.

One of these third century renovations involved the construction of a square temple (Gose's structure 4) on top of an older circular structure (Gose's structure 3) of the first century AD. The walls of the new temple were preserved to such a height that the bottom of three large windows could be identified in each side, as well as the building's entrance in its south-eastern wall (**Fig. 4.5**).[42] In front of the temple was an altar base aligned with the entrance of both the older circular and later square structure, next to which a large (current H. 76 cm) inscribed altar was found, of which the top half had been hacked away.[43]

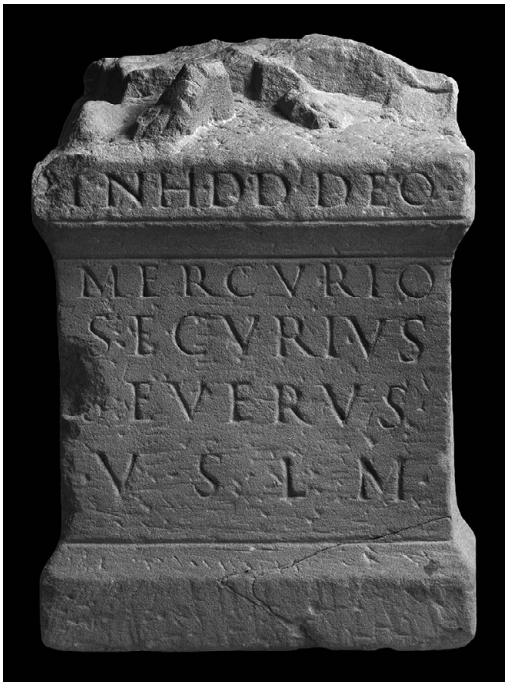
The interior floor was composed of pressed earth, which was originally covered with stone plates in antiquity. In the very middle of the cella was an overturned statue base in red sandstone (**Fig. 4.6**), bearing a dedication to Mercury: IN·H·D·D·DEO· / MERCVRIO / SECVRIUS / SEVERVS / ·V·S·L·M· – "In honor of the house of the gods, to the god Mercury, Securius Severus fulfilled his vow gladly and deservedly."[44] The base was carved in one piece with a statue of Mercury on top, of which only the god's legs and one of his animal attributes, either the goat or the cock, remain. This base and statue rested in turn upon a stone block embedded into the pressed earth subfloor of the building, which itself bore an inscribed dedication to Mercury that was likely carved in the middle of the second century.[45] In Chapter 6, we will see a similar re-use of fragments of an older statue to form the base for a new one at Calès-Mézin (Lot-et-Garonne).



4.5 Trier Altbachtal: the "Mercury chapel" (structure 4) under excavation. The temple replaced an older circular temple (structure 3). In the foreground of the picture is the temple's altar. The statue in two pieces lying next to the overturned base was not displayed on top of it. (Gose 1972, fig. 71)

The Mercury statue and its incorporated base were certainly not contemporary with the building that housed it, since the formula *in h.d.d.* and the use of *deo* before the name of the god, are traits of late second and early third century inscriptions in Gallia Belgica and Germania inferior, and the building is later than AD 275.[46] The back and sides of the base had been left slightly rough, and the back of the animal figure was unfinished, indicating that the statue of Mercury dedicated by Securius Severus was originally intended to stand against a wall or in a niche, not in the center of the room where all sides were visible as it was later displayed. Unless the base somehow ended up in this location by pure chance, or was also being re-used as part of a crude and uneven composite pedestal for some other statue that stood on its side, then it was an older monument that was re-housed in a newer temple.

It is possible that this statue of Mercury was originally displayed in a secondary position in the older circular structure, but had become the focus of so much

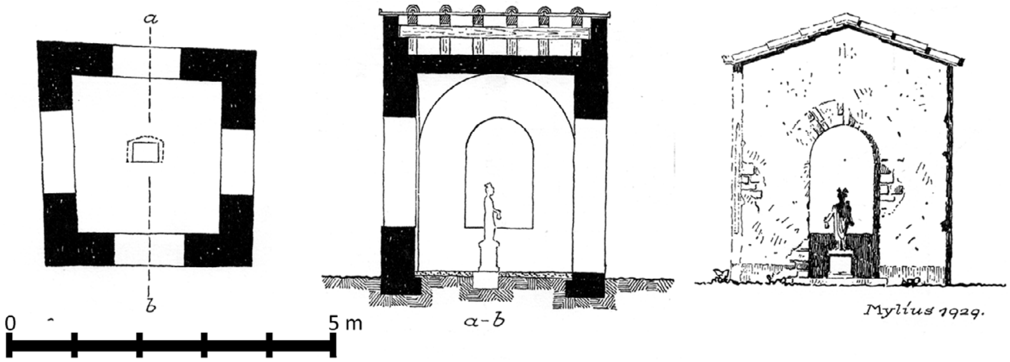


4.6 The idol from the Mercury Temple at Trier Altbachtal. The statue of Mercury was carved in one piece with its inscribed base. Only the very bottom of the figural element survives. Sandstone, H. 55 cm, estimated original height ca. 104 cm. (© GDKE/ Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Photo: Th. Zühmer)

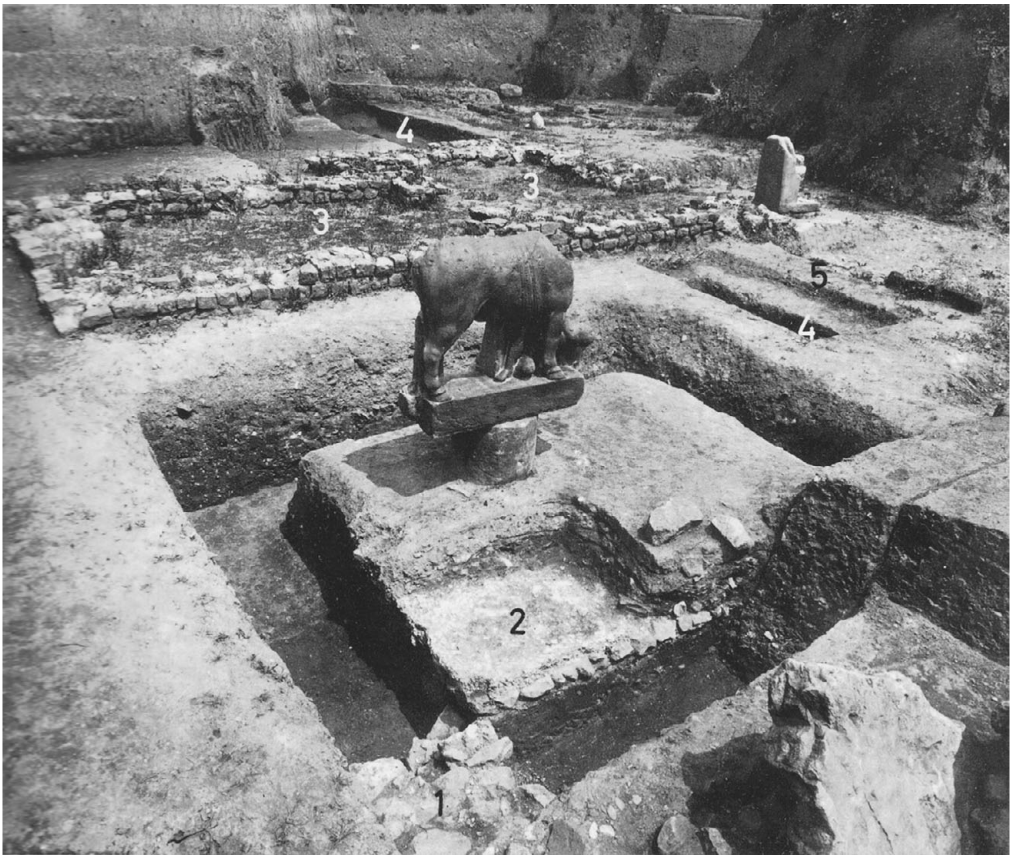
attention and worship that it was given a new temple of its own when the building was rebuilt. It is equally possible that whatever image was initially intended for display in the new square temple was damaged or became somehow ritually polluted such that the dedication of Securius Severus was adopted as a substitute. By this point, the statue would have been 50–25 years old when it assumed this central position in the temple. This re-use resulted in certain incongruities between the idol's size and the structure that housed it. When complete, the statue and its basis would not have stood any more than 1.4 m in height, scarcely filling the windows that surrounded it on all sides, and certainly appearing very diminutive when compared to the large altar that it faced outside the temple.[47] In spite of the incongruous sizes, the spatial relationship between the statue and the altar leave little doubt that the dedication of Securius Severus was actively worshiped, since it was aligned perfectly to see the offerings and sacrifices performed on the altar outside.[48]

Between the idol, the cella door, and the temple's walls was space of merely 1 m, leaving very little room for worshipers to stand inside the cella and interact with the idol. But it could still be seen from the outside of the temple through the structure's door and three large windows. Like the circular building that preceded it, the new temple was as much a canopy as an enclosed space, protecting the idol from the elements, but allowing it to be viewed from all sides (**Fig. 4.7**).

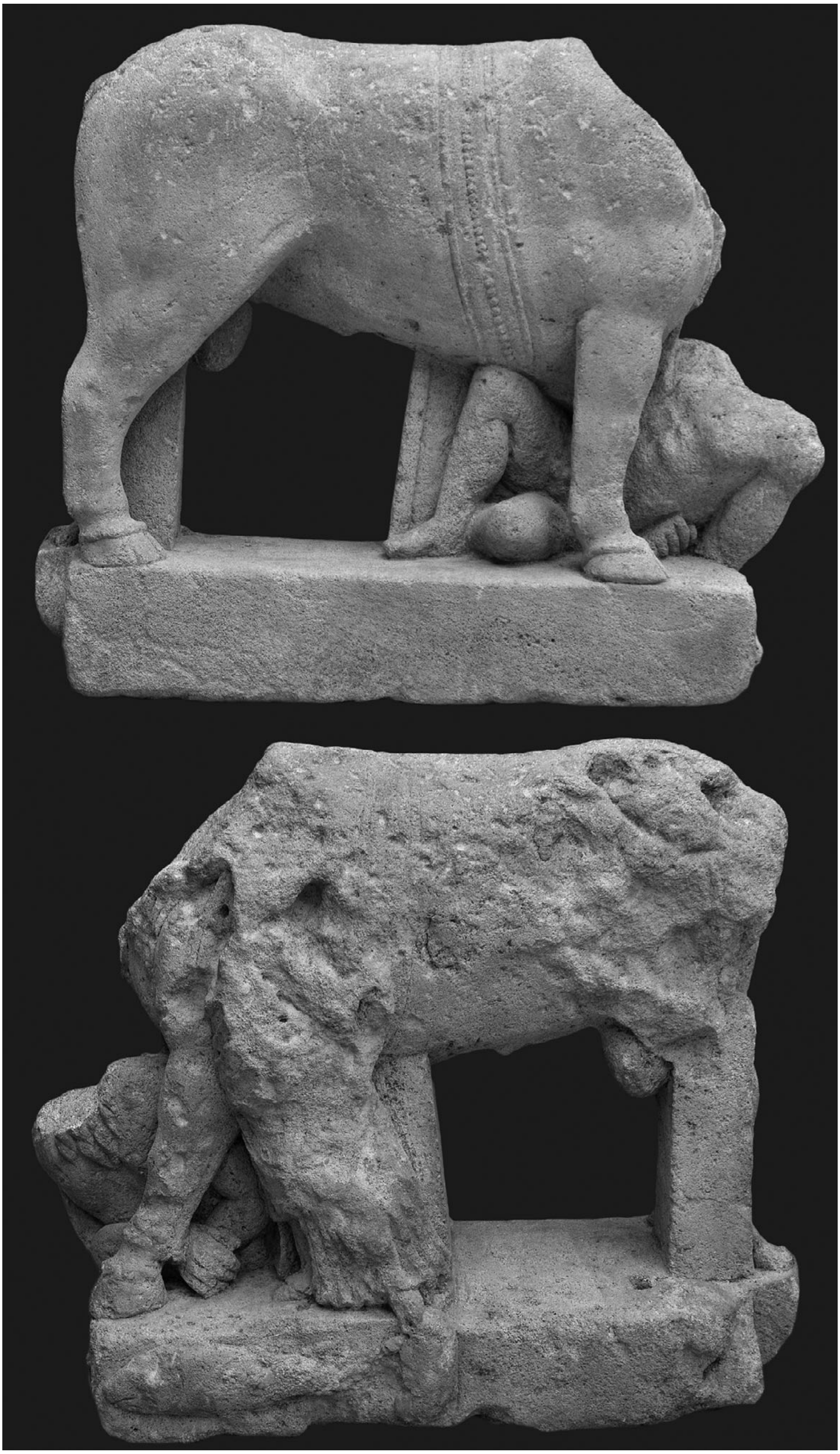
The second temple at Altbachtal with evidence for the original placement of an idol is just as small as the Mercury temple, and was named the "*Stierkapelle*" – "Bull Chapel" by the excavators after the image of a bull that it contained (**Table 4.4**, **Figs. 4.8** and **4.9**).[49] Unlike the temple with the Mercury statue, the walls around the *Stierkapelle* had been robbed out right down to their foundations. Thus we have no evidence for the relationship of the idol to windows or doors. The mortar floor of the chapel was surprisingly well preserved, and shows two phases of construction and renovation. The first corresponds to the first century AD and the construction of the *Stierkapelle*.



4.7 Reconstruction of Trier Altbachtal temple 4, the Mercury Temple. (After Gose 1972, fig. R. Illustration by Mylius)



4.8 Trier Altbachtal, the "Stierkapelle" (structure 23) during its excavation with the idol replaced on its pedestal. The walls of the temple were robbed out right down to their foundations, but the mortar floor of the interior was untouched. No. 2 marks the earliest, first century floor. In the background, the back of the mother goddess statue can be seen (see also **Fig. 4.20** below). (After Gose 1972, fig. 89)



4.9 The idol of the "Stierkapelle," limestone, H. 72 cm. (© GDKE/Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Photo: Th. Zühmer)

The second, which saw a new mortar floor added to the building, dates to the second half of the second century AD. In this phase, a stone column was embedded in the second floor. Next to this column, and lying on a thin layer of burnt material on the new floor, was the statue of a bull for which the structure is named, which presumably once stood atop the column (**Fig. 4.9**).

The limestone bull (**Fig. 4.9**) is depicted striding forward, wearing the sacrificial belt, or dorsuale, around its girth. On its left side stands a badly damaged and robed female figure; below her a fish has been carved in the side of the statue's base. A now headless naked male whose hands are tied behind his back is being trampled by the bull. The most plausible interpretation of the sculpture is that it represents a variant of the three-horned Celtic bull god, which appears on the Pillar of the Sailors (**Fig. 3.11**, labelled "*Tarvos Trigaranos*") and elsewhere in Romano-Celtic art with a similar beaded dorsuale. But without the bull's head, which was hacked away in late antiquity, we cannot count its horns. Moreover, the accompanying female figure and the trampled male are not known in any other three-horned bull representations. The latter figure is reminiscent of the giant being crushed the feet of Jupiter's horse on the Jupiter columns.[50] Certainly the iconography is that of a "native" type of divinity.

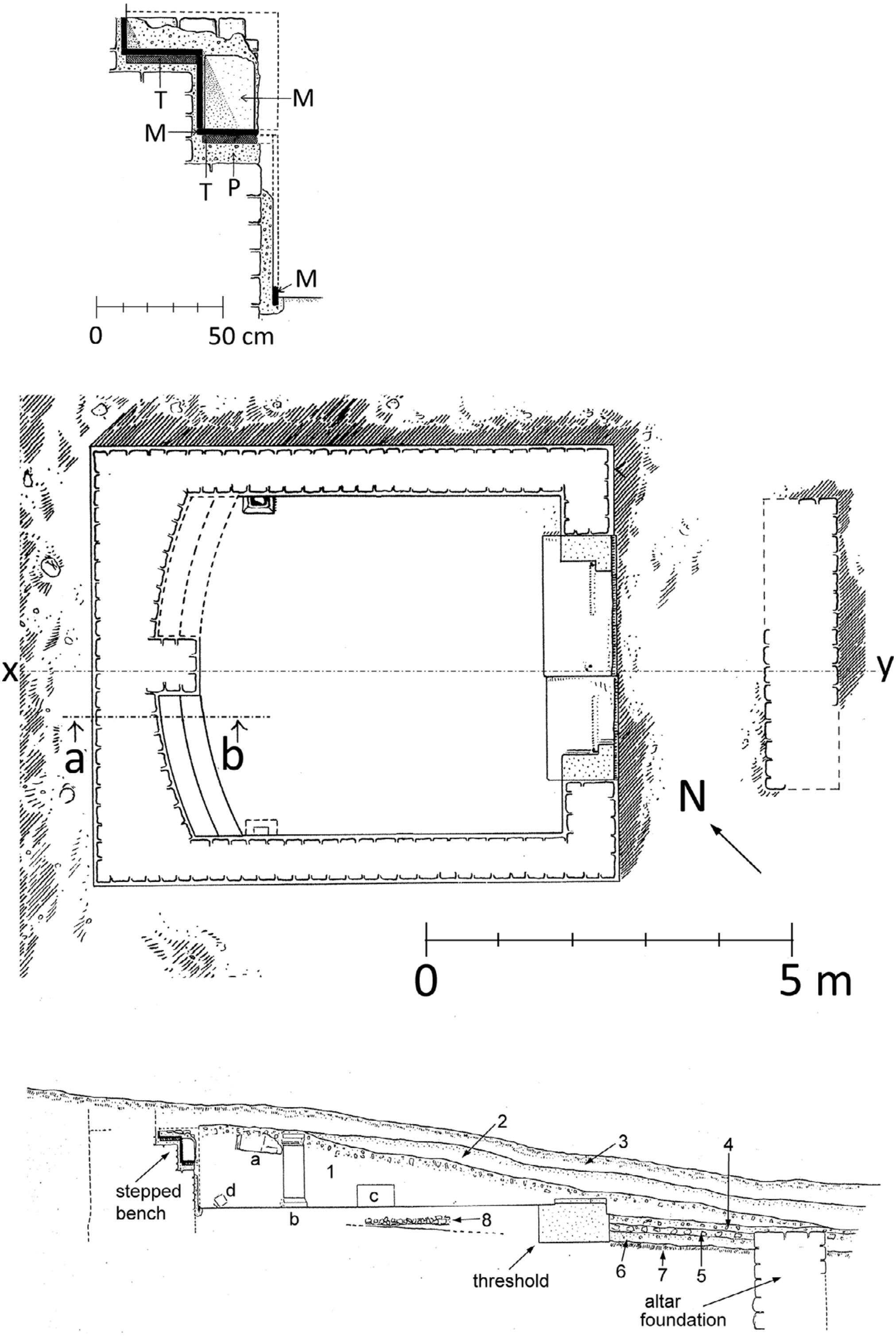
The column and bull stood to a height of 1.33 m above the cella floor, plus the head of the bull. Thus the figure was comparable in size to the Mercury idol discussed above. But unlike the Mercury statue, the bull was displayed in a much smaller temple. If the excavator's reconstruction is correct, it stood to the back of the building with its head facing the entrance, leaving a little less than a meter between it and the walls on three sides. Perhaps like the Mercury chapel this temple was also more of a canopy or aediculum than an enclosed building, or else access to this particular idol was highly restricted. Though it has never been questioned, the use of the column as a base for the bull seems remarkably inappropriate, as the statue itself incorporates a large quadratic base that is more than double the diameter of the column. Was the statue's placement here also secondary? Or was there some special reason for leaving a large part of the underside accessible? For instance, to pick up the idol for use in processions?

Our final example from the Altbachtal sanctuary (**Table 4.3**) is a red sandstone base (116 × 73 cm, H. 45 cm) that stood in middle of the cella of a Romano-Celtic temple with a gallery (Gose's structure 12 "Verputztempel"), and undoubtedly held for the idol of the building. Unlike the impressions from Crain and elsewhere discussed above, which were caused by mortar floors being built around bases, the sandstone base in this temple rested directly on a layer of mortar and stones that had been placed on top of the mortar floor of the interior. The size of the rectangular base is only about double those of the Stierkapelle and Mercury temple, suggesting that the idol, whatever it was, was not especially large. In this instance, far more room (2.4–3 m) was available between the base and the surrounding walls, potentially leaving as much as 48 m^2 free for visitors inside the cella. Thus the idol could be approached or viewed by visitors inside the cella, and there was ample room for offerings to be placed all around it. The presence of a gallery also allowed for circumambulation outside the cella.

A Mother Goddess Temple in the Mars Lenus Sanctuary in Trier

On the other side of the Mosel River from Trier and the Altbachtal complex was another large temple enclosure that was dominated by a large podium style temple constructed on an artificial platform extending out of a steep hill. Dedicated to Mars Lenus, the podium temple was actually a mid-second century AD addition to a significantly older enclosure that extended to its south. Within this enclosure were two small temples, both simple rectangular cellae, built no later than the Flavian period at the foot of the same steep hill from which the podium temple emerged. These two temples are likely all that remains of another large sanctuary complex that was filled with multiple buildings and monuments. In the late fourth century AD, both of these structures were packed with damaged altars and statues and subsequently burned down. Later on, the collapse of a retaining wall in the hill behind the two temples resulted in a landslide that covered both ruins in earth, preserving a snapshot picture of their interiors in this ruined state. In the larger of the two buildings, this picture includes the placement of the cella's idol (**Table 4.17**, **Figs. 4.10–4.13**).[51]

The temple in question was entered from its south-west side, where the surviving threshold blocks show that massive and inwardly opening doors protected the building (**Fig. 4.10**). Outside of the cella, some 2 m directly in front of the door, a large block of red sandstone served as the foundation for an altar or for several small altars or votive reliefs. In the back wall of the temple, aligned with the middle of the doors, a raised pedestal was built into a curved bench (*adyton*). This pedestal once supported a statue of a seated mother goddess that was found in a badly damaged state, pushed off the pedestal, either by earth collapsing from the hill behind the temple, or in the process of the building's final collapse. In either case, the idol came to rest in front of its pedestal on the rubble filled interior of the building (**Figs. 4.10a and 4.11**). In the excavation photo (**Fig. 4.11**), the statue has been raised to the level of its


T
M
M
T
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0
50 cm
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y
a
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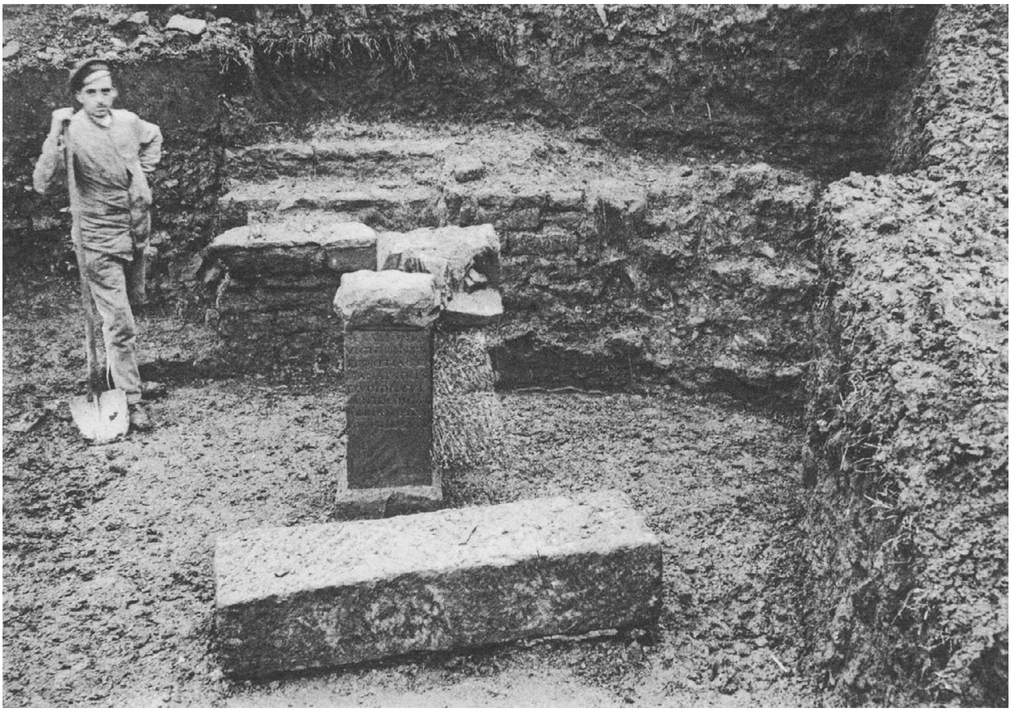
5 m
2
3
4
a
1
c
stepped bench
d
b
8
threshold
6
7
5
altar foundation

4.10 Excavation plans from the mother goddess temple in the Mars Lenus Sanctuary, Trier. Below: Cross-section of the temple (line x–y in plan). Stratigraphy: 1) Building collapse; 2) Earth; 3) Humus; 4) Sand mixed with charcoal; 5) Pressed surface of sandy earth and pieces of red sandstone; 6) Sand and charcoal layer; 7) Natural soil; 8) Foundation of stones for the floor. Finds: a) Displaced mother goddess idol; b) statue basis, c) displaced door post; d) small uninscribed altar (H. 31 cm). Above: Cross-section of the bench in the mother goddess temple (line marked a–b in plan), showing the renovation of a two-tiered bench into a single tier. M = marble, plates and a re-used block; T = tiles; P = plaster. (Adapted from Gose 1954, pl. 7.11, 8.12 and 14.22)

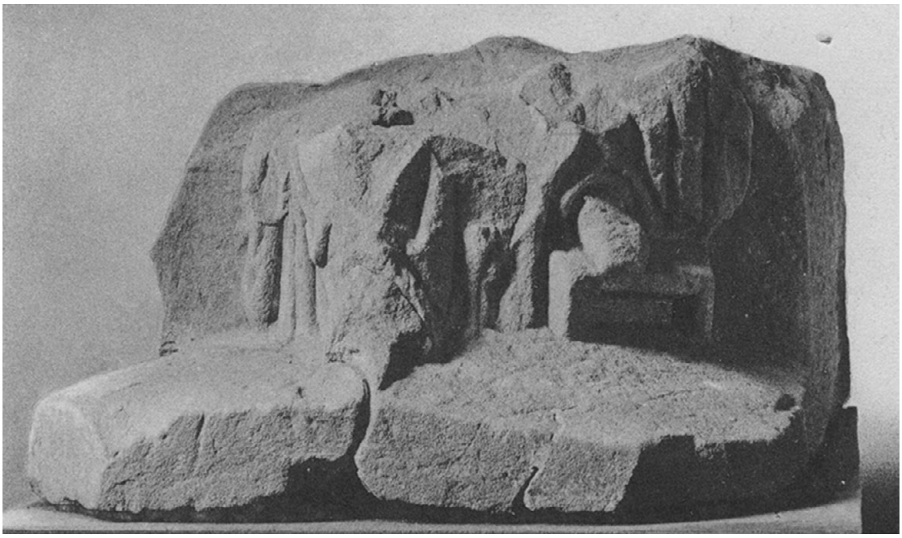


4.11 Interior of the mother goddess temple during its excavation. The damaged idol, raised artificially to the level of its discovery, is just in front of the pedestal in the back wall of the temple on which it originally stood. In front of it is an inscribed statue base that was placed inside the temple after it had been partially destroyed. The block in the foreground was part of the temple's door frame. (After Gose 1954, pl. 13.21)

discovery, directly in front of its original location.[52] The inscribed statue base shown in front of the idol (**Fig. 4.10b**) is in a secondary position, having been placed in the temple in late antiquity along with other dedications from the enclosure, probably around the time that the idol was smashed. Both it and a large stone block from the door frame of the temple sat on top of a thin layer of ash, suggesting the interior had already been damaged when these monuments were placed inside the structure.[53]

The red sandstone statue (L. 56 cm, W. 56 cm, H. 30 cm,), was smashed almost down to the feet (**Fig. 4.12**). The heavily draped legs, one foot of which rests on a stool, could have belonged to either a seated mother goddess or perhaps a depiction of Fortuna.[54] Pilasters in the walls on either side of the bench show that it was covered by a half-domed roof, perhaps resembling a conch shell, an architectural feature that can be seen in several relief depictions of mother goddesses (cp. **Figs. 3.21** and **3.22**).

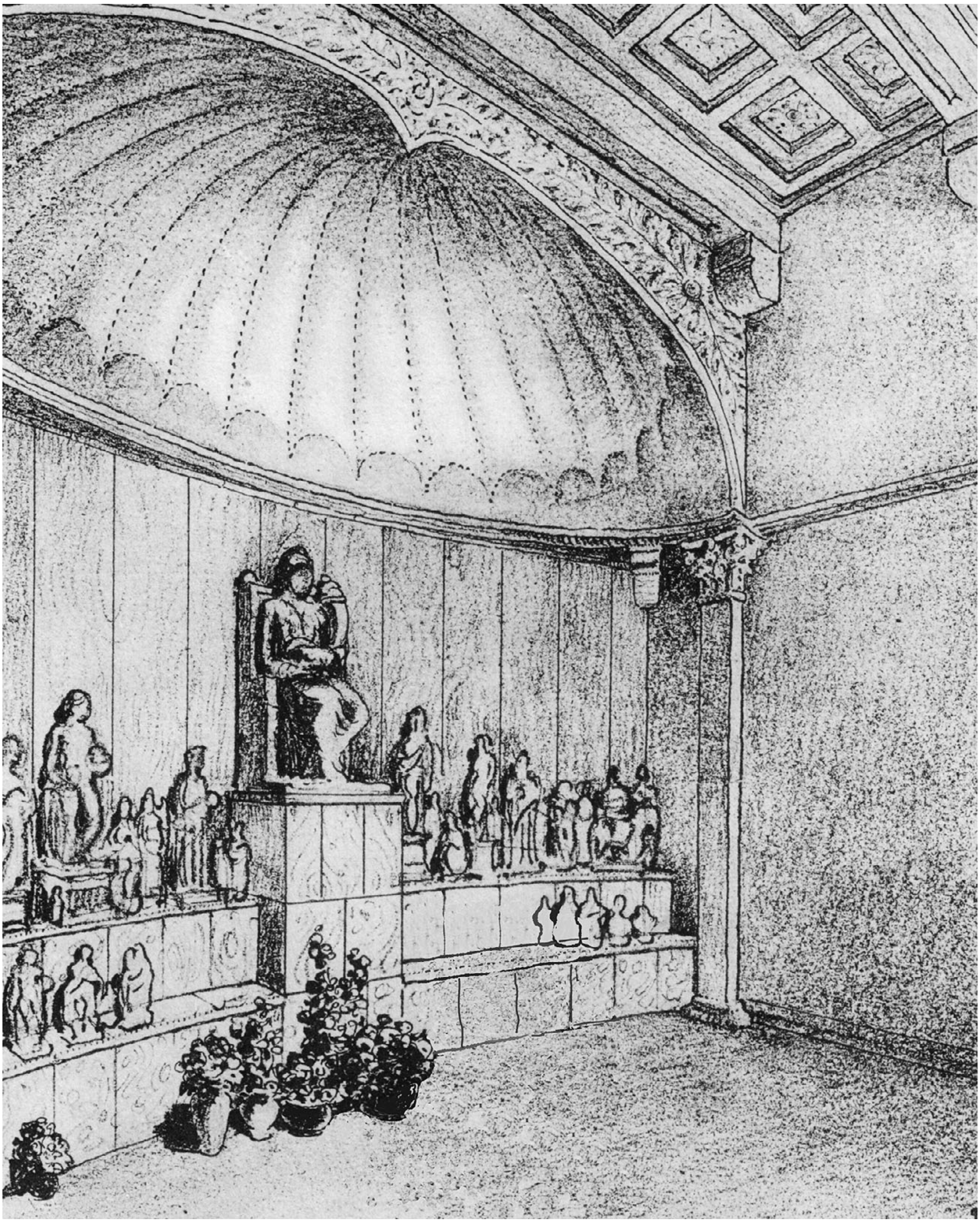
At some point when the temple was still in use, the bench surrounding the pedestal was substantially modified. In its initial form, the bench had two tiers,



4.12 The remains of the idol from the mother goddess temple. Red sandstone, H. 30 cm, W. 56 cm D. 56 cm. (Gose 1954, pl. 16.25)

with colored marble facing adorning its stepped ledges. In a second phase, these two tiers were leveled to create a single platform that was almost at the same height as the central pedestal. Bricks and stones were used to fill the steps, which were then faced with plaster, utterly obscuring the expensive marble facing below (**Fig. 4.10, cross-section a–b**). A variation of this arrangement can be found in the recently excavated temple of Apollo Grannus at Neuenstadt am Kocher, where a curved platform of bricks (L. ca. 4.5 m, H. 50 cm) stood inside the cella, though not directly against the wall, this platform supported a sandstone block (80 × 80 cm) in its center, on which the temple's idol was presumably displayed (**Table 4.13**).

The renovation of the bench in the temple of the mother goddess in Trier must have served some practical purpose, perhaps reflecting a change in the size of votive offerings placed on the bench, or a shift in the way the idol was used. In its two-tiered phase, the shelves on either side of the idol could have supported smaller votive offerings, such as terracotta figurines or oil lamps (**Fig. 4.13**). The later phase with a single shelf is more problematic. It would have allowed for larger offerings, but did so at the expense of the marble decoration. It is tempting to think that the single mother goddess was joined by two more idols to create a trinity, as on the reliefs of the Matronae. Such a development would fit with the idea of the Matronae and other Romano-Celtic divinities as second century Roman inventions, but there is really no proof that this is the case. A miniature altar (H. 31 cm) was found on the floor immediately in front of the bench, and perhaps originally stood upon it to the side of the idol (**Fig. 10d**). The modification



4.13 Reconstruction of the mother goddess temple in the Mars Lenus sanctuary complex. The reconstruction shows the interior in its first phase with a two-tiered *adyton*. (Gose 1954, pl. 14.22. Original drawn by D. Krenker, modified by Chloe Redstone)

of the idol's bench does, however, underscore the fact that way idols were used and staged changed throughout the Roman period. Like Roman villas and houses, the homes of idols were also renovated and improved over time.

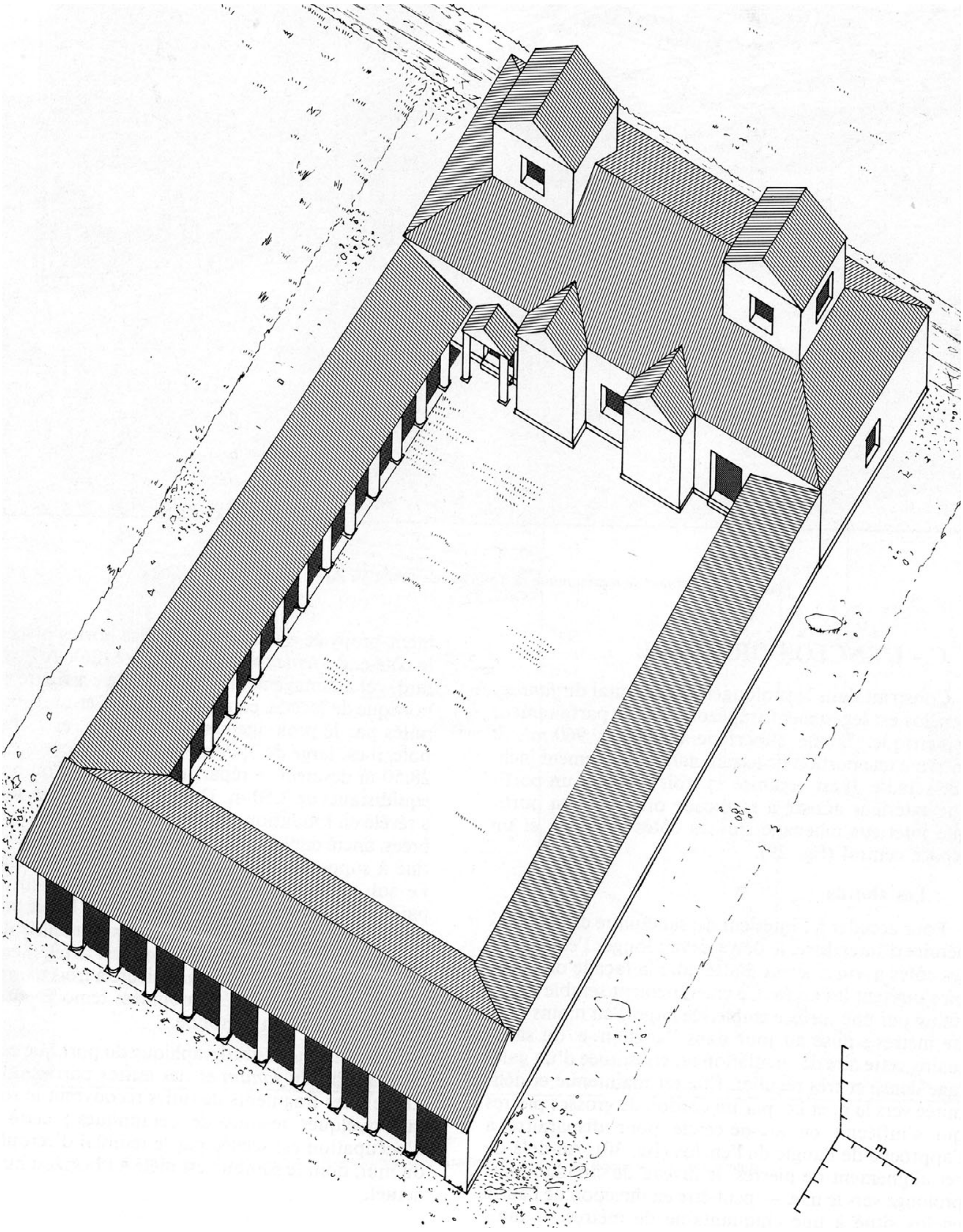
Puy Lautard

The monumental Romano-Celtic sanctuary at Puy Lautard (Creuse), excavated in 1949/50 and 1986, consists of an enclosed rectangular area surrounded by a porticus with a monumental entrance on its east side, and two Romano-Celtic temples on its west (**Table 4.14, Fig. 4.14**). The site is located on a plateau, just off a Roman highway, and is sufficiently isolated from major settlements to suggest that it was primarily used by travelers or pilgrims. The architecture of the two temples, which share a single gallery, is unusual but not unique (cp. Bierbach, **Table 4.5**). Occupation of the site began in the early first century AD, but the monumental structures were not built until the Flavian period, and were used until the middle of the fourth century when the temple was abandoned and systematically demolished for building material. The removal of building material on a large scale probably took place some generations after the idols it housed had been intentionally smashed.[55]

In the southern cella, the idol was supported by at least two octagonal blocks of granite stacked on top of one another (**Fig. 4.15, top** and **Fig. 4.16**). These immensely heavy blocks, weighing around 400 kg each, seem to have sat directly on top of the mortar floor, with no supporting foundation for them below the floor. A series of dowel holes in the blocks allowed thin limestone relief carvings to be attached to their sides. Fragments of three of these reliefs were found inside the cella, each of which depicts a single divinity, namely Neptune, Apollo, and Fortuna. The relief with Apollo is larger than the other two, leading the excavators to conclude that a statue of Apollo originally stood atop the octagonal base.[56] Such a double appearance of Apollo, both in relief and on his base, however, might be one reason to eliminate the god from the list of possibilities, but without more evidence speculation as to the identity of the divinity on the octagonal pedestal could be endless.

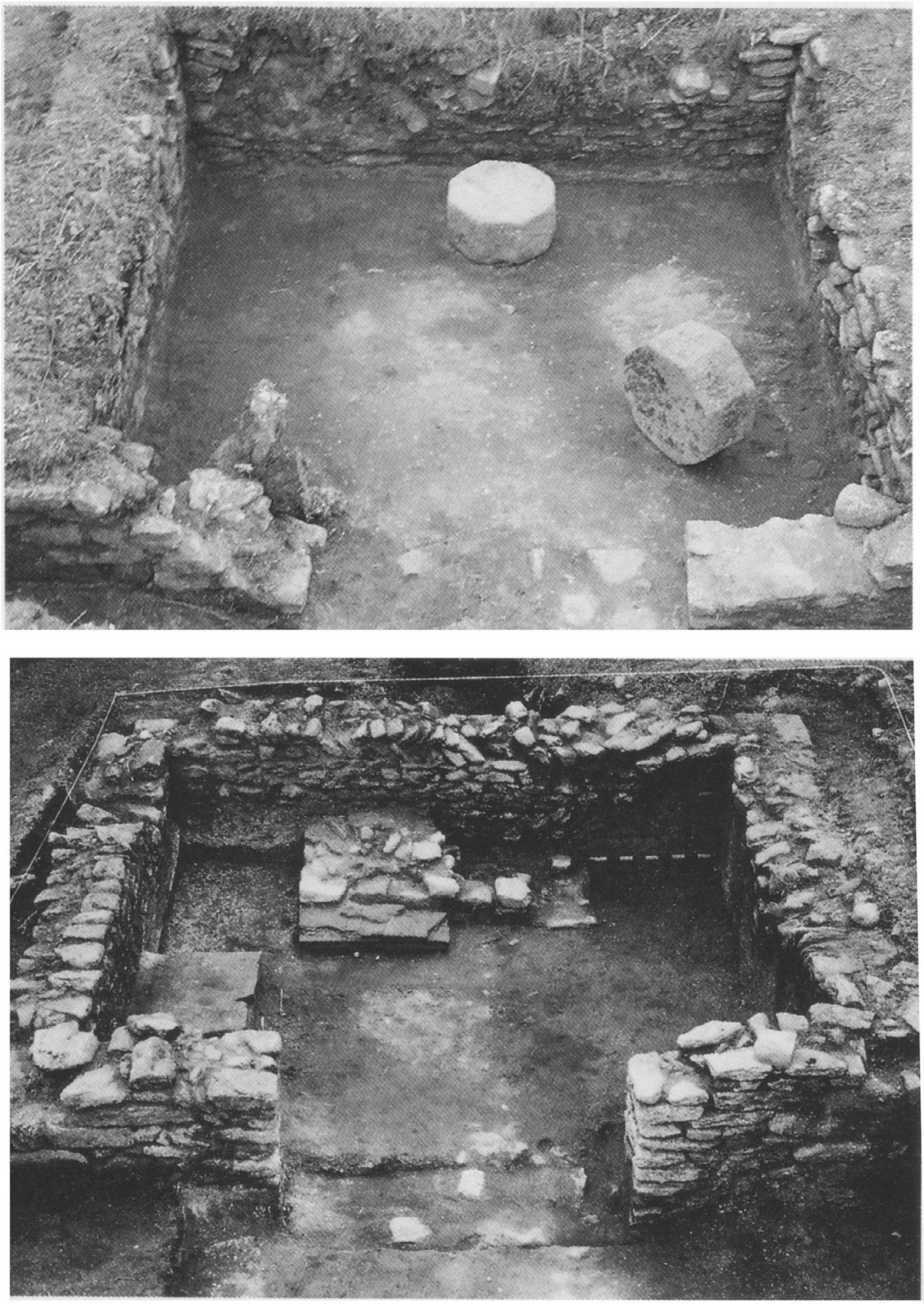
In the northern cella (**Fig. 4.15, bottom** and **Fig. 4.16**), a statue base of stones and mortar was built directly against the eastern wall and was imbedded into the mortar floor. The outer surface of the base was covered with tiles below a layer of plaster with red paint. A row of tiles had been stacked and mortared in place directly on top of the cella floor along the front side of the base. These tiles probably formed a step that allowed the top of the base to be reached, or was conceivably a later extension of the base itself, of which only a portion survives. The only piece of monumental sculpture from the site, the partial face of a life-sized female figure in granite, was found just outside the gallery door in front of the northern cella, and was identified by the excavators as the only surviving fragment of the northern cella's idol.[57]

Both of the idol bases at Puy Lautard were aligned with the doors of the cellae and the entrances to the gallery, with their placement at the back of the rooms indicating that both idols were meant to be viewed frontally. There was sufficient room in both cellae for a small number of individuals to stand

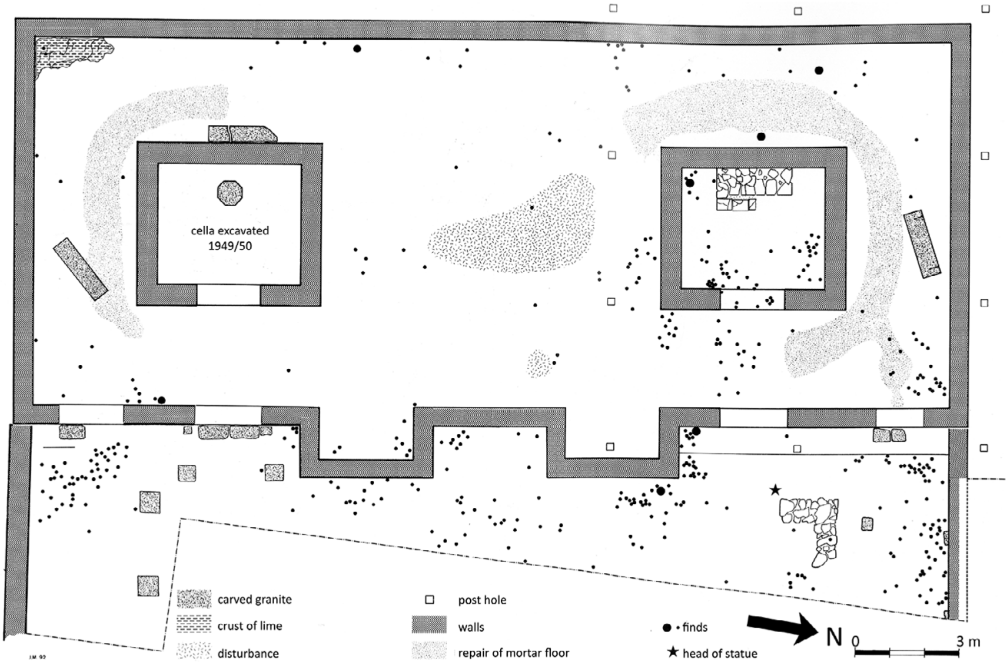


4.14 Reconstruction of the sanctuary at Puy Lautard, with the double temples dominating the space at the back of the monumental enclosure. (After Marquaire 1994, fig. 29)

(approximately 5–11 m^2), or in which offerings could be placed. No trace of an altar was found in the courtyard in front of the temple, though this area was not entirely excavated. The detailed recording practices of the 1986 excavation also provided some evidence for the sort of cult activities that took place within the galleries and cellae to which we will return in the next chapter.



4.15 Interior of southern (left) and northern (right) cellae at Puy Lautard. (After Marquaire 1994, figs. 18–19)



4.16 Puy Lautard with the repaired pathway inside the gallery and distribution of finds. (After Marquaire 1994, fig. 52)

At some point, parts of the white mortar floor inside the gallery at Puy Lautard were repaired with mortar containing fragments of tiles. These repairs left a distinctive path inside the gallery, which corresponded to the regular foot traffic of temple visitors circulating around the cella (**Fig. 4.16**). This traffic pattern corresponds exactly to the sort of circumambulation for which the galleries of Romano-Celtic temples are thought to have been intended. A similar paved pathway surrounded the three rectangular temples at Mouzon (**Table 4.12**).

Comparing the quality of the bases in the two cellae at Puy Lautard, Jean Marquaire came to the conclusion that the southern cella, with its octagonal base and reliefs, was the home a Roman god (probably Apollo), while the northernmost cella, with its simple masonry base, housed a native divinity. The one gallery he imagined as being frequented by wealthy Roman travelers and merchants, the other by indigenous locals who lived near the temple.[58] There is no evidence, however, that such divisions were a part of provincial religious practice. The two cellae are more likely to have represented the homes of a divine couple such as Mercury and Rosmerta, or Apollo and Sirona. The latter couple were venerated at the similarly isolated site of Hochscheid, and a case for them as the main inhabitants of the temple at Puy Lautard could be made on the basis of the relief on the octagonal base, and the fragment of a female face found in the southern cella.

NATURAL AND OUTDOOR IDOLS

The worship of anthropomorphic idols inside temples does not preclude the worship of natural and aniconic ones, or the worship of images and objects displayed outdoors. In the late Roman and early medieval period, bishops and Christian holy men would complain of the continued worship of stones, springs, and trees by superstitious peasants.[59] The phenomenon was not a new one. The prehistoric stone formation occupying an entire cella at Triguères (**Fig. 3.2**), and the construction of a Roman base around a prehistoric standing stone at Gué-de-Sciaux, illustrate how long such objects could remain the focus of ritual attention.[60] The addition of Roman structures to these objects either affirmed the continuity of their holiness, or indicated a renewal of their divine status. In either case, it also amplified the ritual value of these aniconic idols and served to focus more attention upon them, framing them in the current Roman style of sacred space.

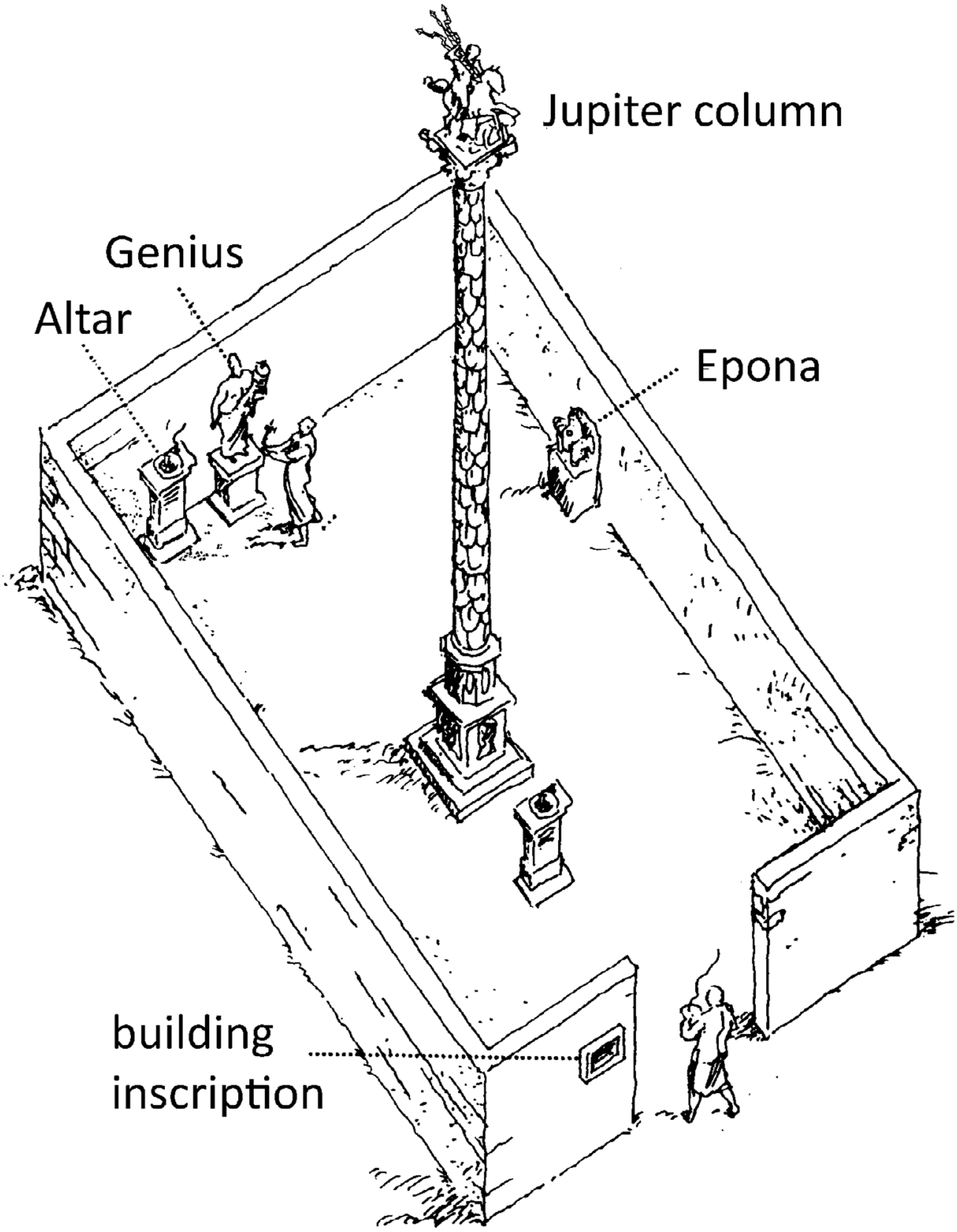
Many Romano-Celtic sanctuaries were centered on natural springs. At most of these sites, there was a clear connection between spring water and healing.[61] At Hochscheid, Ihn, and Fontes Sequanae, springheads were actually capped and filled pools inside the cellae of Roman temples. At Ihn, an altar stood directly before an octagonal Romano-Celtic temple containing the springhead.[62] At Deneuvre, another spring sanctuary site, water was collected in at least three basins around which altars and reliefs were placed (**Fig. 4.22**). Votive *stelae* and altars depicting Hercules were scattered amongst the basins, around which cult activity must have been focused.[63] The fact that sites like these were centered on pools and springs does not exclude the presence of a figural cult image or idol in the cella, as the reliefs of Apollo and Sirona found at Hochscheid suggest (**Fig. 6.5–6**).

Sacred trees leave little or no mark in the archaeological record, though we have plenty of anecdotal evidence for their worship. In the fourth century AD, Martin of Tours encountered a group of pagans who worshiped a tree standing next to a temple. In fact, the story suggests that the local pagans fought harder to protect the sacred tree from Martin's destructive attentions than the temple next to it.[64] At sites like the first century AD enclosure at Hoogeloon (Netherlands), which contained only alignments of postholes, we may speculate upon the worship of natural objects like trees, or wooden poles, comparable to the single *holzidole* worship identified at Nierderzier. At Le Bernard (Vendée), entire trees were deposited in pits (**Fig. 6.10**), and may have been the subject of worship beforehand.[65] A tree appears to be growing out of a temple on a relief altar of the Matronae from Pesch, and fragments of a stone tree were found at the same site.[66] We cannot, however, say anything about their placement or function. Perhaps individual trees received a fenced-off enclosure or were located next to altars, as seems to have been the case with the stacked pillar monuments and Jupiter columns.

Adjacent to the ritual enclosure at Jouars-Ponchartrain, where one of two Romano-Celtic temples included the foundations for an idol (**Table 4.9**), fragments of a monumental pillar comparable to the Pillar of the Sailors were found next to the foundation upon which the monument must have once stood. Coins from below the foundation suggest it was constructed in the late first century AD. The most complete piece of the pillar bears a partial inscription (VICANI), and fragmentary reliefs representing the inhabitants of the vicus, as well as native and Roman divinities. Coins and other votive offerings were found clustered around the monument's foundation, as if they had been left as offerings around the pillar. In the early second century AD, a wall, connected to the adjacent temple enclosure, was built around the pillar.[67] Access could now be controlled, and ritual attention, evidenced by the coin offerings, was being paid to the pillar on a regular basis. In short, the outdoor monument seems to have been endowed with some degree of agency, even though it was not housed in a temple.

Since they always included an accompanying altar, there is no doubt that Jupiter columns received sacrifices, but evidence for their original placement is rare. The only example still standing from antiquity, at Cussy-la-Colonne (Côte d'Or), was too crudely explored by antiquarians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to provide much useful information.[68] In the Roman vicus of Grinario (Köngen, Baden-Württemberg), a small enclosure (7 × 10 m) excavated in 1900 seems to have been centered around a Jupiter column, though the same area contained an altar inscribed with a dedication to a Genius, along with what is probably the head of Genius statue, and a fragmentary relief of Epona (**Fig. 4.17**).[69] A mid-second century building inscription, probably mounted on the enclosure wall, describes the area as a "maceria" – "wall" or "enclosure" dedicated to Jupiter Optimus Maximus that was paid for by the citizens of Grinario.[70] The top of the column would have stood well above the enclosure wall, and have been visible to travelers on the street where the enclosure stood. Once again, there is no temple building, and no room for one within the enclosure, but the space is dominated by an outdoor idol.

Discoveries at two other sites show that the Jupiter columns were placed in a similar manner to the pillar at Jouars-Ponchartrain and Grinario. Excavations at Bavilliers (Territoire de Belfort) in 2009/10 uncovered a walled enclosure 32 × 32 m, which was accessed by a gate on its south-east side. The enclosure was centered around an impressive foundation of *opus caementicium* resting on wooden piles. The wooden piles gave a dendrochronological date of AD 122/3, while a metal thunderbolt found near the foundation confirmed the hypothesis that the structure had once supported a Jupiter column. As at Jouars-Ponchartrain, coins and ceramic offerings were clustered around the base at Bavilliers, which was systematically demolished along with the sanctuary in the late fourth century.[71] Finally, at Bad Bubendorf, near Basel, a walled enclosure of 15 × 17 m


Jupiter column
Genius
Altar
Epona
building
inscription

4.17 Proposed reconstruction of a roadside enclosure with Jupiter column in the vicus of Grinario. (Adapted from Luik 1996, fig. 25)

surrounded the base for another Jupiter column, of which two fragments of the god's bundle of lightning bolts and a capital were recovered.[72]

While the Jupiter columns at the sites would still have been visible from some distance, the low walls surrounding them limited intimate access, and could keep back crowds while sacrifices and other rituals were conducted in the enclosures. On the most basic level, enclosure walls could also keep out simple pests such as wandering dogs and other animals. In each of these open-air enclosures, the central monument, or idol, stood in the middle of them, dominated the space, and was the focus of ritual actions.

MITHRAEA

Whether in Rome, Germany, or the Danubian provinces, the basic layout of Mithraea shows relatively little variation, and when known, the placement of the tauroctony, the focal point within the Mithraic temples, is always the same. Mithraea could be built in underground settings, or were buildings with floors set below the circulating ground level outside, such that they imitated the cave in which the bull-slaying story of the cult's god took place, and which, in Roger Beck's view, was simultaneously a model of the Mithraic universe. Various inscriptions even describe the Mithraeum as a "*spelaeum*" – "cave."[73] This design is fortuitous for the archaeologist, since these basement temples quickly filled with rubble, preserving details of their internal layout that are lost in podium temples or even in Romano-Celtic temples.

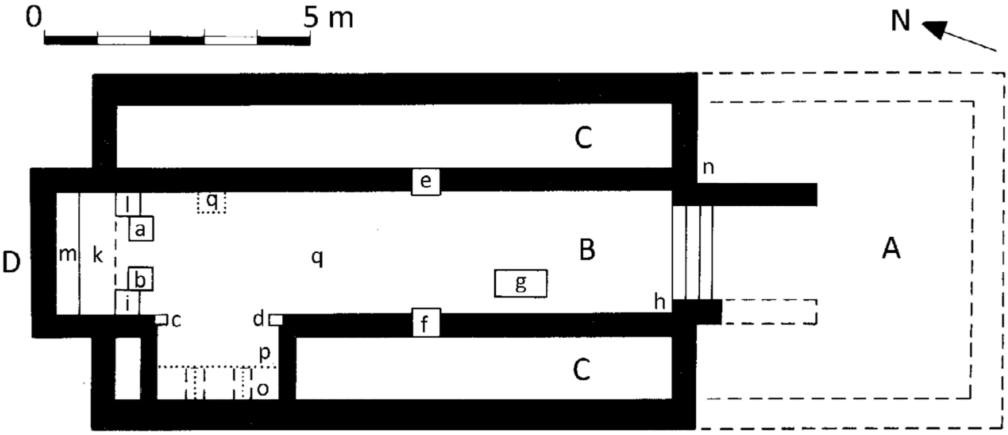
Early work on Mithraea focused exclusively on their interior layout, but more recent excavations have demonstrated that external structures played a role in ritual activity as well. It would have been impossible, for example, to sacrifice animals cleanly within the innermost sanctum of a Mithraeum, and finds from the Mithraeum at Tienen suggest that Mithraea sometimes hosted large events outside of the building in which food was prepared for a crowd far larger than the interior of the Mithraeum could possibly handle. The Mithraea at Tienen, Güglingen, and Martigny all included a fenced-off area around the temple building in which animal sacrifices, cooking, and other activities presumably took place.[74] Within major cities like Ostia, Mithraea were sometimes connected to other large public buildings such as baths, theaters, apartment blocks, and houses.[75] Presumably these Mithraea could also interact with the urban world outside the sealed and private space of the temple itself, which was reserved for the initiates.

The importance of intimate interaction amongst worshipers in the Mithraic cult was so great that when Mithraic communities outgrew single temples, they built more Mithraea rather than larger ones. At Frankfurt-Heddernheim (Nida), a small Roman settlement and auxiliary fort, there were four Mithraea, and even the small vicus at Güglingen possessed two.[76] Compared to the German *limes*, the Mithraea on Hadrian's Wall are surprisingly small and few in number, but follow the same design pattern as their counterparts in Germany and elsewhere.[77] At Rome, we have the remains of eleven Mithraea, and at Ostia sixteen, but hundreds of inscriptions and Mithraic monuments in Rome that are not connected with a Mithraeum confirm that these sites represent only a fraction of the original number.[78] While the location of the

Mithraeum was probably no secret, their interiors were decidedly a private area to which access was almost certainly limited to cult members.

The layout of Mithraeum 3 at Frankfurt Heddernheim (Roman *Nida*) serves as a fine example of a Mithraeum's interior (**Figs. 4.18** and **4.19**) and the placement of the tauroctony. Excavated in 1893, the building cannot have been constructed any earlier than the late first century AD, and sat 220 m along a road leading out of the military fort at Nida.[79] Its layout is broadly similar to the other three Mithraea at Nida, including Mithraeum 1, which produced the rotating relief discussed in Chapter 3 (**Fig. 3.29**).

Initiates entering Mithraeum 3 had to pass through a preliminary room, or entrance hall (**Fig. 4.18A**), before descending stairs into the heart of the Mithraeum, a long narrow room (**Fig. 4.18B**). Raised benches lined the walls on either side of this chamber, and was positioned some 80 cm above the floor (**Fig. 4.18C**). At the far end of the room, the tauroctony stood on a podium (**Fig. 4.18k**) that raised it to the level of the benches, with a half-domed roof above it painted in imitation of a star-filled sky (**Fig. 4.18D**). The large tauroctony (150 m × 17 cm, Th. 30 cm) was composed of two large sandstone blocks, but at least two or three further blocks, now lost, must have encased the surviving bull-slaying scene. The blocks probably formed a grotto-like arch with images of the zodiac, as on the rotating tauroctony of Mithraeum 1. A trench behind the podium, some 50 cm below the floor of the Mithraeum (**Fig. 4.18m**), is something of a puzzle. The excavators suggested it contained a wooden support for the blocks of the tauroctony, though this does not seem

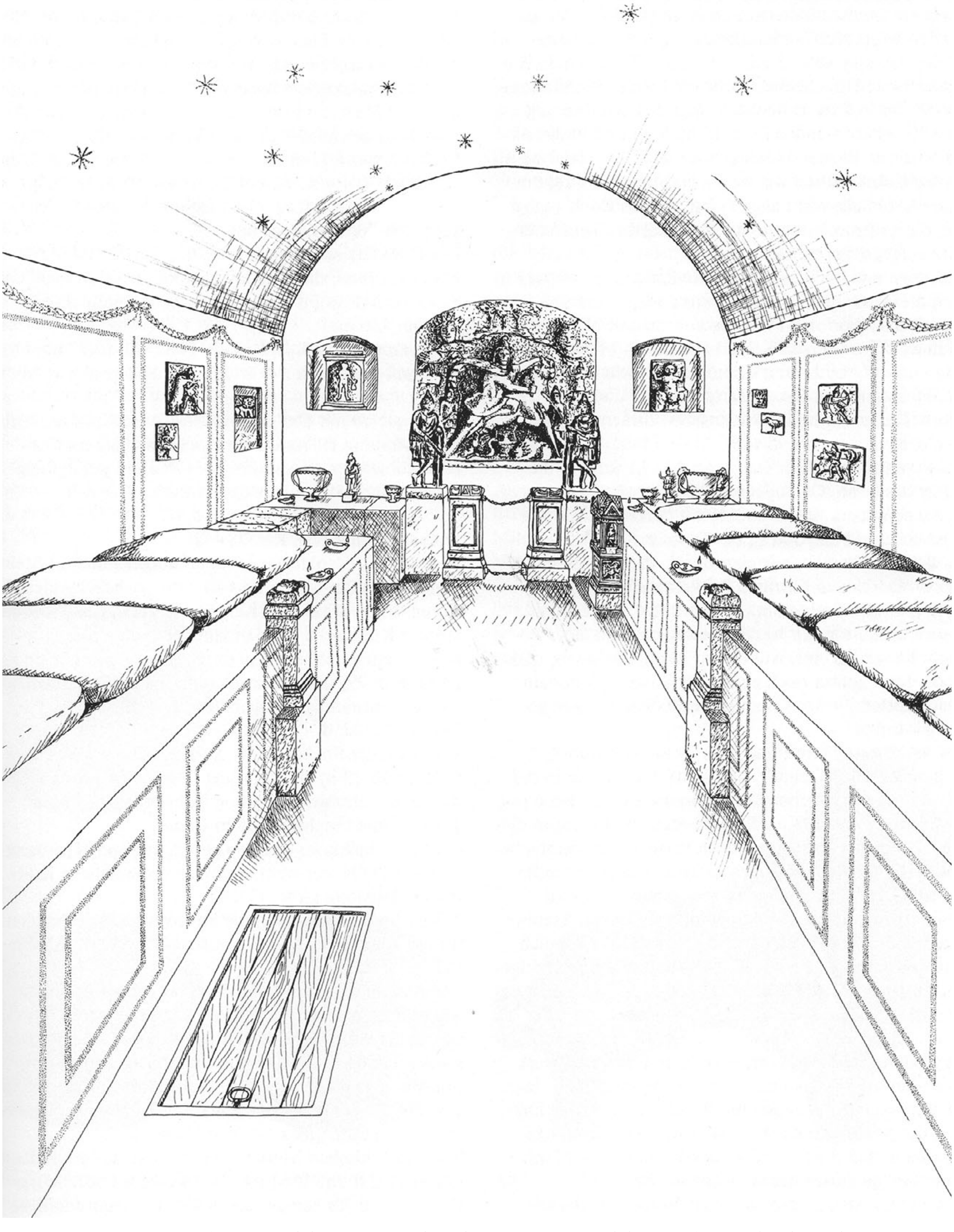


4.18 Plan of Mithraeum 3 at Frankfurt Heddernheim (Nida) (After Hulde-Zetsche 1986, fig. 13). A) Vestibule; B) Cella (lower floor); C) Raised couches; D) Niche for tauroctony; a–b) altars, with slot for gate or screen; c–d) altar bases; e–-f) altars; g) cult pit / foundation deposit?; h) Cautopates statue; i and l) Cautes and Cautopates; k) socle for cult image; m) trench behind socle; n) fragmentary statue; o) Lion-headed god relief; p) window for viewing o; q) votive pillar of Senilius Carantinus; k) raised podium for tauroctony. (Archäologisches Museum Frankfurt) to have been necessary and the space excessively large.[80] Perhaps a Mithraist could hide in this space and emerge at a dramatic moment, or "speak" for the image of Mithras, a dramatic trick well known for statues and temples in the Greek east.[81]

Apart from the tauroctony, we also know where much of the sculptural inventory of Mithraeum 3 at Nida stood. Two uninscribed altars (**Fig. 4.18a** and **b**) stood in front of the tauroctony podium, and were flanked by reliefs of Cautes and Cautopates (**Fig. 4.18i** and **l**), the Mithraic torch-bearers. This placement of altars and secondary sculptures, usually with dedicatory inscriptions, is entirely normal in Mithraea, and it was in exactly this position that the Sol and Luna altars from Mundelsheim (**Fig. 3.28)** were found. Other sculpture at Nida was displayed further away from the podium, including a square pillar bearing reliefs dedicated by one Senilius Carantinus, that stood on the east side of the cella (**Fig. 4.18q**), and two uninscribed altars across from one another in the middle of the benches (**Fig. 4.18e–f**). Another statue of Cautopates stood on the south side of the entrance (**Fig. 4.18h**), and an unidentified fragmentary statue was located on the north side of the doorway outside the door to the inner sanctum (**Fig. 4.18n**). Various reliefs and fragments of other images found in the rubble inside the Mithraeum, which include a smaller tauroctony in marble, must have been mounted on the walls of the interior.[82]

Two features of Mithraeum 3 at Nida are somewhat unusual, but illustrate the kind of variations found in Mithraea. The first is a walled rectangular cavity (100 × 50 cm, 79 cm deep) dug into the floor of the cella, which contained the jaw bones of bovines and chickens.[83] Unlike the foundation deposits recorded at other Mithraea (see Chapter 3), this pit was walled and thus meant to be reusable. In the reconstruction reproduced here (**Fig. 4.19**), it is represented covered by a wooden trap door. Whether the pit recorded the memory of single event, as proposed for the pits at Tienen, was a foundation deposit, or simply a functional container, a storage cupboard, or a dramatic hiding place for an actor in the Mithraic rituals, we will never know.

The other striking feature at Nida consists of an interruption in the bench on the west side of the Mithraeum just before the podium with the tauroctony, where an extra rectangular niche has been added, flanked with altars on either side (**Fig. 4.18c–d**). This niche is a slight deviation from the layout of most Mithraea, in which the benches normally continue on both sides right up to the wall with the tauroctony. The back of the niche at Nida was divided into three small cells, which formed the lower part of a countertop. The southernmost of these cells contained with a relief depicting the lion-headed god, one of the secondary figures of Mithraic art (**Fig. 4.18o**), and directly in front of this relief stood another block (**Fig. 4.18p**) into which a narrow window had been carved.[84] This unusual arrangement meant that the relief of the lion-headed god could only be viewed by very carefully crouching and



4.19 Reconstruction drawing of the interior of Mithraeum 3 at Frankfurt-Nida. (Archäologisches Museum Frankfurt, after Huld-Zetsche 1986, fig. 16)

looking through the slit-like window. Perhaps the other two cells also worked in this way, containing cult images or objects. This was another innovation, or light trick, appropriate to the kind of staging that was employed by Mithraic cult images.

Access to the tauroctony and a full view of the image within the Mithraeum could be blocked by screens and curtains, allowing the idol to be hidden from view, or parts of the relief to be exposed, illuminated, and explained to initiates at the correct ritual moment. At Nida, the approach to the tauroctony in both Mithraea 1 and 2 was controlled by a wooden gate or screen, evidenced by slits cut into the sides of the altars that stood in front of it.[85] It is uncertain whether these slots supported a low wooden gate or a large panel that allowed the entire tauroctony to be blocked from view. In Mithraeum 3, the same controlling feature may have taken the form of chains or a rope suspended between the altars in front of the Mithraeum (**Fig. 4.19**).

The raised benches at Nida, present in all Mithraea, were an essential feature, functioning as dining couches for the Mithraists. It was while lying on these couches, on either side of the tauroctony, that Mithraic congregations conducted their secret rituals of initiation, and ate their sacred meals, all placed in far closer contact with their idol than was normal in Romano-Celtic or podium temple.[86] Visitors to the latter two types of temple viewed their idols from galleries or through the temple door, or while standing in the cella. The space occupied by the Mithraists in their temples was decidedly more familiar and relaxed.

The private nature of the Mithraeum may be compared with Roman club houses, or *collegia*, in which the members of different clubs and guilds met. These club houses often incorporated both dining rooms and shrines within their layout, albeit in separate rooms. The Mithraeum, on the other hand, actually combined these two types of space, providing dining couches in the same space as cult images and the tauroctony. Whether or not the tauroctony could be turned to present a banqueting Mithras, as in Mithraeum 1 at Nida (**Fig. 3.29**), or was a one-sided depiction of the bull-slaying scene, its position within the Mithraeum occupied the central position at the banquet. According to Roman dining conventions, the middle point was reserved for the guest of honor in a regular human triclinium, with the host reclining to his right, and it may be that the setup of the Mithraeum was essentially similar, with the tauroctony seated in this place of honor.[87] Certainly this manner of staging of the Mithraic idol was unlike that of any other Roman temple.

IDOL PLACEMENT COMPARED TO OTHER CULT IMAGES

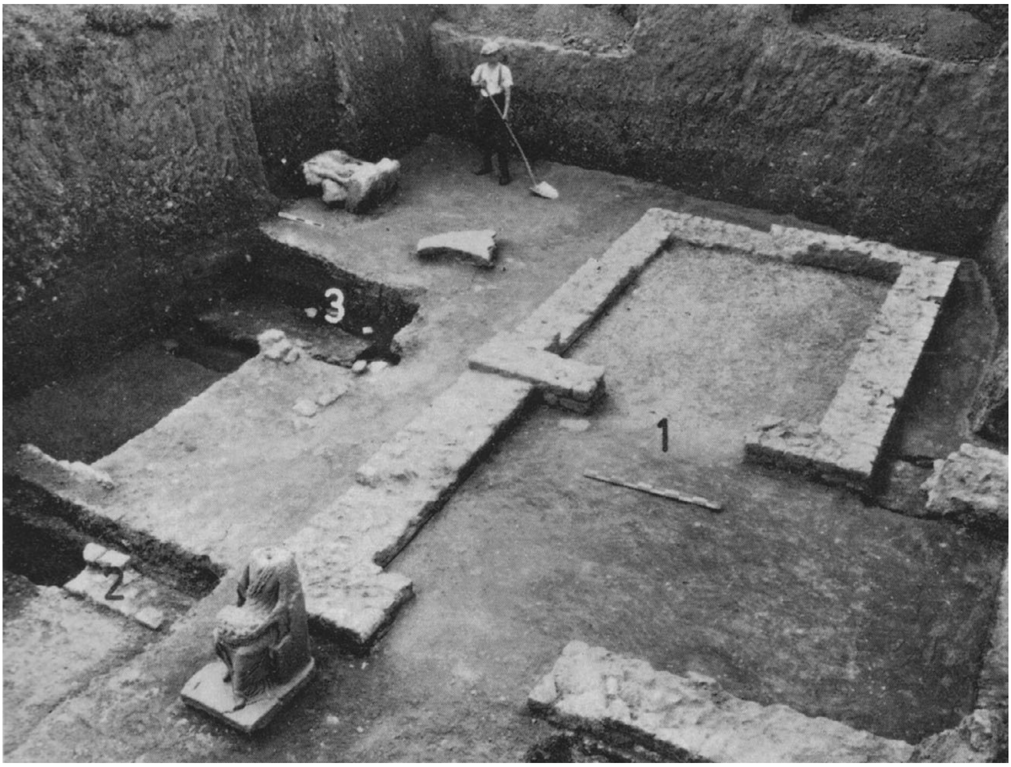
In each of the Romano-Celtic temples discussed above, and listed in the table below, an idol, as evidenced by its base, was the focal point and dominating element of the building. This position is one of the things that allows us to distinguish idols from other cult images, but of the seventy temples found at Trier Altbachtal, only three produced evidence for idol placement, while the site yielded hundreds of sculptural representations of the gods. It is impossible that all of these statues and reliefs were idols, even if some of the temples housed multiple gods, and many of their idols did not need large or permanent statue bases.

In fact, almost all of the Altbachtal sculptures were found in destruction layers or re-used in secondary contexts. Not far away, in the Mars Lenus temple complex, two small cellae were found packed with sculptures that had originally stood around the temenos. If we are to understand the central placement of idols within Romano-Celtic temples as a significant indication of their idol status, then it is worthwhile to compare their placement to that of other cult images within the sanctuary complex.

Frustratingly, we have far less evidence about the original placement of votive sculpture and altars than for the idols themselves. This is, in part, because early excavations did not always extend far beyond temple building walls, but also because the secondary monuments did not always receive or require substantial bases. The sparse evidence that we do possess suggests that the placement and bases for these dedications was quite varied, even within single sanctuary sites, and that dedications could be moved around, or change in status, as seems to have been the case with the Mercury idol in the Mercury temple at Altbachtal discussed above.

At some sanctuaries, votive sculpture was displayed around the temple, or was placed in or near the gallery of Romano-Celtic temples. At temple 12 at Altbachtal, where we have evidence for the cella's idol base, a seated mother goddess statue was found *in situ* in the north-west corner of the gallery, sitting with her back against the gallery wall (**Fig. 4.20**), and just to the left of the entrance to a small building that was connected to the gallery (cp. **Figs. 4.7** and **3.20**, **Table 4.3**). There is no doubt that the mother goddess was intentionally placed here for long term display, as a layer of tiles had been set on the ground below her for stabilization.[88] Whether this was a primary or secondary location for the statue is uncertain, but it was certainly a periphery location, quite unlike that of the centrally placed idol bases inside the temple's cella.

The mother goddess statue at Altbachtal is similar in size (52 × 64, H. 80 cm), to the idol bases recorded inside the other temples at in the sanctuary, notably the Mercury Temple and Stierkapelle, or in the temple of Alpes at Thun-Allmendingen. But unlike the idols of these temples, it was supported only by a few tiles resting on a pressed earth floor, and included only a very slender (H. 7 cm) socle as part of its own design. The now missing head of the goddess would only have reached the hips of visitors standing inside the gallery, and one would anticipate a sculpture like this to have an inscribed base of some sort that would raise it to eye level. It seems likely then that this was not the original position for which the statue was made, but that is beside the point. At the time the mother goddess was placed in the gallery of the temple,



4.20 Trier Altbachtal. The mother goddess seated inside the outer gallery wall of a Romano-Celtic temple, and to the left of the entrance of its annex building (see plan in **Table 4.3**). At the back left, the bull idol in the *Stierkapelle* (see above **Fig. 4.8**). (Gose 1972, fig. 86)

she was being accorded a far less auspicious and less visible place than an only slightly larger statue that stood on sandstone base inside the same temple's cella. We have no way of knowing if the mother goddess once stood on a similar pedestal in a temple of her own, or had always been a secondary cult image. By the time it was installed in the corner of the gallery, however, it surely possessed less agency than other more prominently placed statues from the Trier Altbachtal complex.

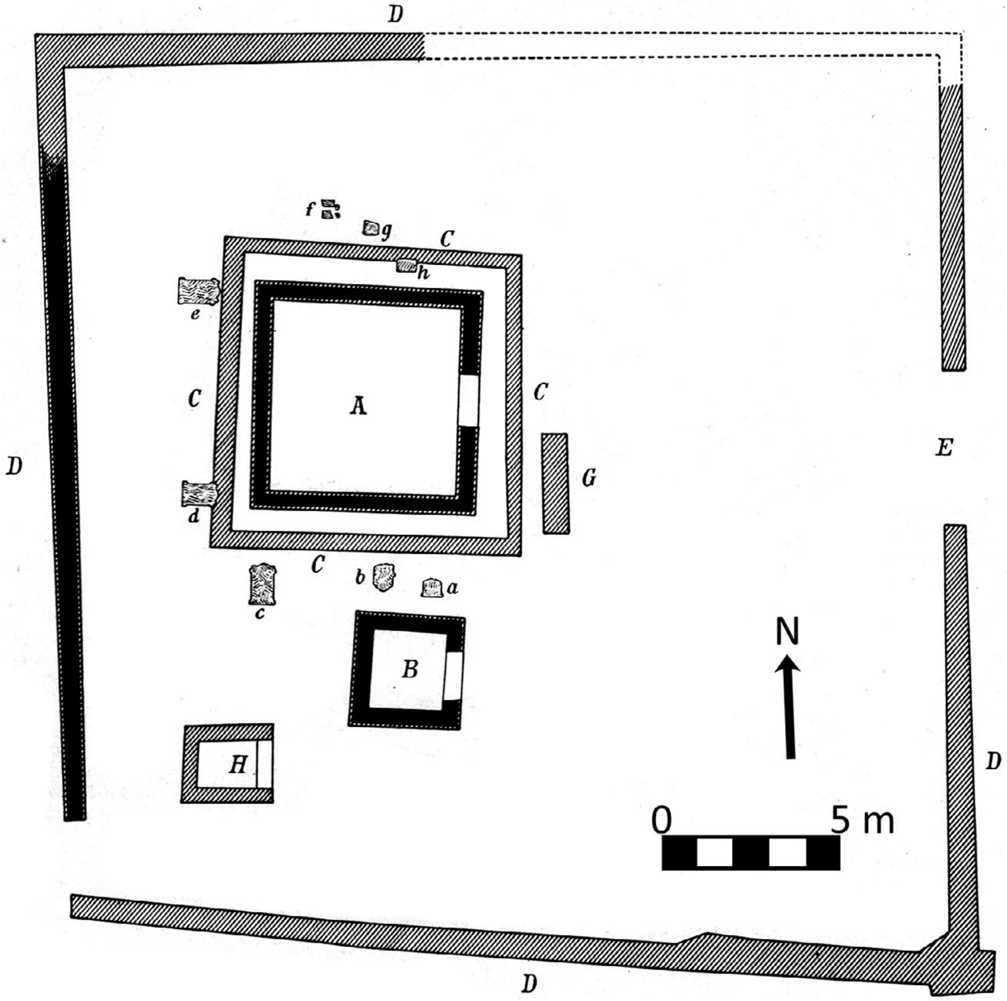
The dedication of images of "other" gods and goddesses in or near the temples of a different divinity seems to have been entirely unproblematic, as the example of the Temple of Concord in Rome discussed above illustrates. The same was true in the provinces. For example, at Thun-Allmendingen, a temple that must have been the home of the god Alpes (see Chapter 5) also contained a marble statue probably depicting Annona, and a small terracotta statuette of Venus. The inscribed altars placed in front of a single temple at Osterburken (Baden-Württemberg) were similarly addressed to many different divinities, whom the dedicators evidently thought most pertinent to their needs or personal tastes.[89] It may simply have been that the dedicators of "foreign" gods and goddesses believed that they had received, or hoped for, favors pertinent to the realm of a divinity who lacked a proper temple within a given sanctuary complex. On the other hand, the placement of images of a divinity's peers within his or her own temple could also remind visitors of the idol's legitimate status amongst the other members of the heavenly community, who were represented at the site in smaller format and displayed in less prestigious locations.[90]

A similar peripheral placement of multiple cult images has been recorded at the sanctuary of the Matronae at Nettersheim (**Fig. 4.21**), where eight votive reliefs and altars were found around the outside and inside of the main temple's gallery wall, and a low rectangular wall just to the south of the temple's entrance. This wall (**Fig. 4.21G**), is similar to the rectangular base that stood in front of the mother goddess temple in the Mars Lenus complex (**Fig. 4.10**), and was probably used as a support for votive altars and reliefs. The other offerings at Nettersheim evidently rested directly upon the ground around the temenos, or perhaps even stood against the outer temenos wall.[91]

The rectangular base in the Mars Lenus complex, and two square bases at Bierbach (**Table 4.5**), were all aligned directly in front of temple entrances, parallel to their galleries, suggesting that they were meant for altars upon which the gods could see sacrifices being burned or libations being poured. The rectangular base at Nettersheim, and the thesaurus at Crain, however, were set deliberately to the side of the temple entrance such that a clear the view of the idol would not be inhibited. At other sites, square stone and tile foundations have been recorded scattered within the enclosure near to temples, and could have supported altars or sculptural dedications.[92] Though it is difficult to reconstruct rules about how these cult images related to other buildings or pathways around the temenos, it seems unlikely that the use of sanctuary space was entirely random.

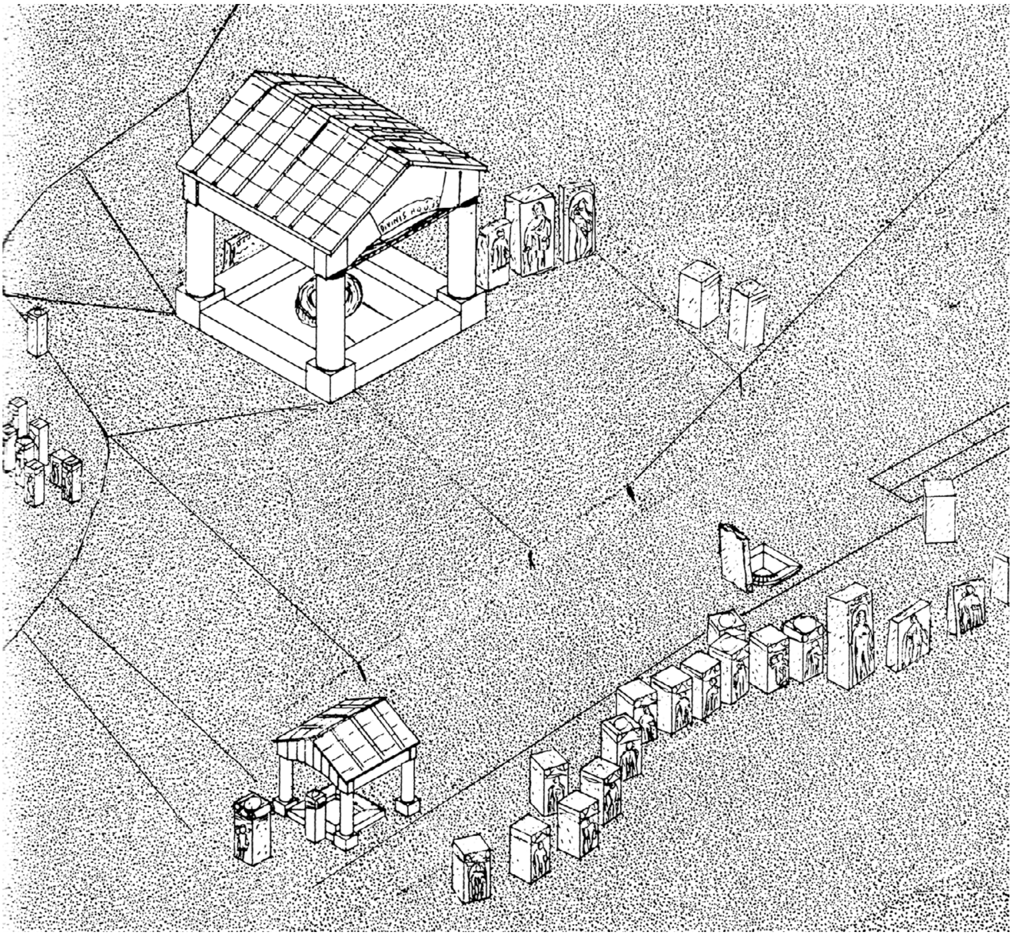
Other alignments of votive altars and reliefs were recorded in early excavations at Gundershoffen (Bas-Rhin), where stelae with reliefs of Mercury were found in 1823, and on the mountain top sanctuary at Donon (Grandfontaine/Michelbrunn, Bas-Rhin), where stelae, again mostly depicting Mercury, were aligned in a semi-circular pattern.[93] If the reliefs at these sites represented the site's main idol, then they likely served to foreshadow the encounter that visitors would experience as they approached the heart of the temple complex, heightening their anticipation for the ultimate interaction with the god or goddess.

Some semblance of structure in the arrangement of votive monuments can be seen in the layout of cult images in the rustic sanctuary at Deneuvre (Meurthe-et-Moselle), where numerous reliefs depict the god Hercules. The



4.21 Plan of the sacred enclosure at Nettersheim with votive monuments (a–h) surrounding the gallery of the Romano-Celtic temple (A). (Adapted from Lehner 1910, pl. 23)

site included no temple buildings, but rather a series of paths, altars, and votive monuments surrounded by a large covered springhead and two water basins. Presumably these structures were the focal points of worship at the site, with the spring water being used for ritual washing or drinking (**Fig. 4.22**), but we have no way of knowing if these fountains were not also associated with an idol. Altars dedicated to Hercules Salutaris and reliefs depicting the god (e.g. **Fig. 3.27**) were clustered around the basins, many set into a specially prepared mixture of clay and stones. At least one, recovered in a very mutilated state, was positioned so that the image of Hercules stood directly before a basin, as if presiding over the holy water.[94] Another eighteen stelae were found in a single line on the east side of the site, with their sculpted sides facing away from



4.22 Deneuvre sanctuary site reconstruction. Votive altars and stelae surround a covered springhead and basins. (After Moitrieux 1992 pl. 9, illustration by D. Moitrieux)

the basins, perhaps lining a path along which pilgrims progressed, or, as the excavator proposed, forming a rough temenos wall.[95] Unlike the monuments near the basins, the ground below these monuments had received no special treatment, and relief stelae and altars were intermingled in no particular order. Either these dedications could not afford a better position, or had been moved away from the basins when they were supplanted by newer offerings.

Confirmation that votive cult images could be moved or re-arranged is nowhere better attested than at the spring sanctuary of the *beneficarii* stationed on the *limes* at Osterburken. As at Deneuvre, some of the altars at Osterburken were placed near the temple's entrance, while thirty-one of them were placed in six rows to the east of the path by which the temple was approached. Consular dates on the better preserved altars reveal that the older monuments were put in the row furthest away from the path, and were blocked by rows of progressively newer dedications. The deities addressed were a mixture of state and local divinities, with multiple deities usually mentioned on a single stone. These include Jupiter Optimus Maximus, Juno Regina, Fortuna Redux, all the gods and goddesses (*dis deabusque omnibus*), as well as the Genius Loci and a spring goddess named Candida.[96] The altars and bases were mounted in slotted plinths, with which several were still connected. In other instances, only the plinth or altar has survived.[97] Presumably each altar at Osterburken once occupied a prime location, either near the temple or right next to the path, and was used for sacrifices there for a limited time. As the original dedicators were transferred away from Osterburken, their altars were replaced by newer dedications and moved to less prominent positions.

Finally, cult images that were not idols could also be stored and displayed in the cellae of temples. At Altbachtal, one large Romano-Celtic temple (**Table 4.1**) included an apse in the back wall of the cella where the idol was presumably displayed, though no traces of a base were found. But just to the left of the apse, on the north-west corner of the cella, a large sandstone base (115 × 179 cm, H. 0.45 cm) was set on the temple's first mortar floor.[98] When the temple was re-built, perhaps sometime in the second century, a new floor was laid inside the cella, and incorporated a limestone plate (102 × 74 c m, Th. 5 cm) flush with the new floor level in the opposite corner of the room, to the right as one entered the cella. Presumably this was the foundation for a larger socle. Whatever stood on these two supports would have been continuously visible to the idol in the apse. Both bases can be interpreted as supports for larger votive sculptures, but of course they may also have been used to support small images, such as bronze or terracotta figurines, sacrificial implements, or processional statues, but their size suggests a more imposing dedication such as a stone sculpture. If so, these sculptures were placed such that they would not block the direct line of vision between the temple door and its apse, where the idol presumably stood.

It should be recalled that there is nothing to hinder the creation of a new idol via the ritual mechanism of a vow or dedication. In fact, there are plenty of inscriptions in Rome's north-western provinces that attest to the dedication of an "*aedem*" with either "*ornamentis*" or a "*signo*," as well as an "*aram cum signo*." Of course, *ornamenta* are certainly secondary decorative images, and *signa* probably are as well, but these dedicated images were housed in their own temples and some were accompanied by altars such that they might receive sacrifices.[99] It even seems fairly likely that the many small aediculae and simple temples at sites like Trier Altbachtal were constructed over the years as a result of personal vows.

One impulse might be to see these inscriptions recording dedicated statues in temples as conclusive proof that there was no distinction between idols and other cult images, but we must not forget that many of Rome's indisputable and celebrated temples were themselves constructed and endowed with idols as a result of vow's made by generals in the late Republican period (see Chapter 2). The distinguishing factor between the two types of cult image is not how they were made, but how they were perceived, used, and displayed. Quite apart from whatever rites of consecration or activation caused votive statues to become imbued with divine presence, what really mattered was whether or not they were assigned a sense of agency by temple visitors. A dedicator might hope that his or her statue would become the subject of divine presence and veneration, and even provide it with an altar and temple to help it on its way, but whether or not it succeeded in attaining idol status in either the short or long term was another matter entirely.

Even this minimal evidence for the arrangement of votive monuments and altars confirms that there was a distinction between them and idols. Idols were placed at the center of temples, often on substantial permanent bases set into the floor. Altars and reliefs stood to the sides, with lesser or transient foundations. Most were located outside the temple building, and could be moved around. Amongst all cult images there was a hierarchy of positions with some monuments enjoying more prominent spots, near to temple doors or areas of high visitor traffic, while others were relegated to less accessible parts of the sanctuary. The situation seems to reflect what we know about monumental dedications in the large sanctuaries of ancient Greece, such as Delphi and Olympia. Presumably dedicators would pay a high price for a premium place of display, using votive sculptural monuments as a means of advertising their piety, but also to increase their status and importance in the local community.[100] As new reliefs, altars, and statues were donated to the idols, they became images encircled by other images, which often repeated the central image, and thus enhanced its importance, or placed that idol alongside representations of other divinities, thus affirming the idol's place in the realm of the gods.

Over time, as the fortunes of the dedicators changed, their monuments ran the risk of being relegated to a lesser position. Others, however, like the Mercury statue at Trier Altbachtal, suffered the opposite fate, becoming sufficiently popular amongst temple visitors that they were re-housed in their own temples, effectively becoming idols. The driving factor behind such a positive shift in meaning was likely more to do with an idol's acquired social agency than any of its other attributes.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Having seen examples of idol placement in Romano-Celtic temples, of idols outdoors, and in Mithraea, as well the settings of other cult images both within temples and temple enclosures, it is possible to make some general observations, considering how setting and staging contributed to a sense of agency.

Placement, Access, Viewing, and Size

Where idols have been found *in situ*, we have only seen single divinities occupying the central basis of the temple, but on artworks depicting idols we do find multiple divinities in the same temple. Divine couples and triads of gods and goddesses are a notable feature of Romano-Celtic religion. Consider, for example, the triad of the Matronae (**Figs. 3.21** and **3.22**), or the depiction of Cernunnos with Apollo and Mercury at Reims (**Fig. 3.13**). The framing of both reliefs, and the presence of bases in the Cernunnos relief, show that we are dealing with images of statues in a single temple. In the Reims relief, the cross-legged god sits on a formidable raised socle, whereas Apollo, and presumably Mercury, stand on only very insubstantial supports. Did this reflect a difference between bronze and stone images, or a hierarchy of idols? The three figures of the Schneidershecke watchtower sanctuary, Mars, Salus, and Victoria, (**Fig. 3.28**), or the Sirona and Apollo reliefs at Hochscheid (**Fig. 6.5** and **6.6**), confirm that such shared accommodations were a possibility in reality as well as in art. Of course, where only bases have survived, we cannot say with certainty that they supported only one statue.

In striking contrast to the conventional Roman podium temples, it was quite common for idols to be positioned in the very middle of the cella of Romano-Celtic temples, especially in temples with galleries (e.g. **Table 4.3, 6, 8, 9**). This suggests that the placement of the idol was connected to an indigenous tradition of circumambulation, in which it could be viewed from all sides. The same tradition can be seen in the pathway that surround three cellae at Mouzon (**Table 4.12**), or the pathway inside the gallery at Puy Lautard, where both idols were stored against the back wall of the cellae (**Fig. 4.16**). In this respect, it is interesting to note that the idol base at Jouars-Pontchartrain was constructed over an earlier first century AD pit (**Table 4.9**), as it suggests continuity in the central placement of the focal point in Romano-Celtic temples.

More familiar positions for idol bases can be found in Romano-Celtic temples as well. We find idols in apses at Trier Altbachtal, in the nearby Mars Lenus complex, and perhaps in the curved pseudo-apse bench of Neuenstadt am Kocher (**Table 4.1, 13,** and **17**). Niches within cella walls, or aedicula-like arrangements have been proposed for the watchtower temple at Schneidershecke, and for the well preserved "Temple of Janus" at Autun.[101] Many idols were placed against the back wall of the cella, though a surprising amount of space is often left behind them. As with podium temples, there was room for variation within the internal layout of the Romano-Celtic temple, but the guiding principle was that the idol was the focus of visitor attention. Idols were always positioned within temples such that they were the focal point of the room they occupied, and of the temple itself.

Where evidence for the doors of the cella and its gallery is preserved, (**Table 4.2, 5, 7, 10, 12–14,** and **17**), the idol was always aligned with them, with temple doors as wide as or wider than the statue base. The notable exception is Saint-Aubin-sur-Gaillon (**Table 4.14**), where the door of the cella was almost half the width of the idol's base, but even here the idol base was centered upon it. Perhaps in this case the idol simply did not occupy the entire base. The obvious general conclusion, however, remains that when the temple doors were open, idols could be seen by worshipers even some distance outside the cella. Simultaneously, the idol itself could look out at the activities taking place outside his or her home. This simple organization of space raised the idol above other cult images, regardless of their potentially superior material or artistic quality, making the idol the center of attention.

Other methods of emphasizing the idol were more subtle. Bases were decorated with reliefs or painted plaster (Puy Lautard, Saint-Aubin-sur-Gaillon, Neuenstadt am Kocher), and, at the Mars Lenus complex, expensive imported marble and a half-domed apse framed the mother goddess idol. The continual addition of votive cult images around the temples of much beloved idols, as seen at Osterburken, Deneuvre, and Nettersheim, formed another decorative layer of honor, attesting to the potency of the divinity housed in the temple, and emphasizing his or her proper place amongst the gods. In Mithraea, the raised niches, cosmic symbols, and ancillary monuments that surrounded the tauroctonies did more than just emphasize them, they reconstructed the wider Mithraic cosmos within the Mithraeum, while Mithras was positioned as if seated in the place of honor in a dining room.

It is possible some idols were viewed through windows instead of doors or by visitors standing in the cella. In the Mercury temple at Altbachtal (**Fig. 4.7**), large windows allowed the idol to be viewed from all sides. Evidence for ground level windows in the cellae of other Romano-Celtic temples is extremely rare, since walls are rarely preserved to window-level heights. The cellae of some Romano-Celtic temples with a gallery definitely lacked windows at ground level, but we may speculate with some confidence that they were present at sites like Crain, and in a later phase in the so-called Temple of Janus at Autun.[102] Elsewhere, the daylight source of illumination for cellae probably came from windows placed high in the cella walls, above the gallery roof. Where the idol stood in the middle of a cella with a gallery, worshipers could perambulate in the gallery while glimpsing the idol through the cella's door, with the object of their attention being illuminated from above. Presumably any temple windows would have had shutters to protect the interior and the idol both from the elements, and to provide the idol with privacy from unwanted viewing. In addition to housing and staging the idol for worshipers, temples provided protection and security for the divinity in his or her home.

This security also meant that temple buildings could limit the accessibility and visibility of the idol for ritual reasons. Doors and windows could be closed to prevent viewing, and at Matagne-La-Grande, the two postholes on either side of the idol base surely supported a screen or curtain used to shield the idol from public view (**Table 4.11**), a feature that was probably fairly standard in Mithraea. The size of a temple's cella also restricted the number of people who could view the idol up close. Even the largest examples discussed here could have contained only a relatively small groups of people experiencing the most intimate encounter with the god, a figure who literally dominated the middle of the room. Large festival crowds could only see the idol from outside by looking in, or by queuing up to access the temple's interior, as seems to have happened at Puy Lautard. In this respect, outdoor idols like the Jupiter columns, which also stood high up in the air, had a distinct advantage over those in temples. They could be seen from some distance. The Mithraic tauroctonies, at the very opposite end of the spectrum, were housed in temples specifically designed to create exclusive encounters, attended only by small groups of select initiates.

Denying or restricting access to idols in their homes may have served to enhance their mystique and status. If only the most privileged members of society, whether priests or the wealthy, were allowed direct access to idols, then the status of the idol was raised to at least that of the same section of society with whom it was associated. All the rest could only glimpse the divinity through windows and door-frames, while their betters communicated with the gods on more intimate terms. In the next chapter, we shall see what sort of direct interaction with the divinity was enabled by close-up access to it. Since idols could hear and receive the prayers of worshipers, and be both gazed upon and return their worshipers' stares, proximity with them could be equated with proximity to the divine.

Inside the cella, the amount of space provided for idols and their worshipers also varied considerably from temple to temple (estimated in **Table 4**). The cellae at temples like that at Saint-Aubin-sur Gaillon (**Table 4.15**) conceivably had sufficient room for some dozens of visitors at one time, whereas temple C at Matagne-la-Grande (**Table 4.11**) would surely have felt cramped with even one or two people inside it. In any temple, the amount of free space within the cella would have been reduced not only by wooden furniture and offerings, but also by the distance visitors were kept back from the idol, neither being factors that archaeology allow us to easily determine. In Roman podium temples, Mithraea, and Romano-Celtic temples, activities outside the temple were part of the overall experience of visiting a sanctuary, an experience in which the encounter with the idol inside the cella was a potentially climactic moment.

The size of the surviving bases provides some clue as to the size of the idols, even if an idol did not fill its base entirely. Free space may have been left intentionally on bases so that offerings could be left directly at the feet of the god, as appears to be the case with the curved apse in the mother goddess temple in Trier (**Fig. 4.13**), and on a curved apse recently excavated in a temple of Apollo Grannus at Neuenstadt am Kocher (**Table 4.13**). The bull-god and Mercury idols at Altbachtal, as well as the mother goddess in the Mars Lenus temple, were all surprisingly small, but filled their bases entirely. The largest base discussed here, at Crain (**Fig. 4.4**), probably supported an over-life sized image of which fragments were recovered. At Saint-Aubin-sur-Gaillon (**Table 4.14**), Jouars-Pontchartrain (**Table 4.9**), Mouzon (**Table 4.12**), and Puy Lautard (**Fig. 4.16**), the bases were large enough for colossal idols, or else supported multiple smaller idols, and divine triads and couples.

The bulk of the surviving idol bases, however, are surprisingly small, ranging from 0.5 to 1 m^2 (**Table 4.2–5, 13, 14**), which implies that life-size and under was a fairly common size for an idol. The mother goddess idol from the Mars Lenus complex, as well as the Mercury and bull idols from Trier Altbachtal, were all less than half life-size. Moreover, far larger statues and reliefs, including some in bronze and marble, have been found at these same sites. Some smaller and less substantial idols continued to be objects of veneration long after larger votive monuments had begun to outshine them. This observation underscores an important point about idols. It was the social agency of an idol that really mattered, not its size.

Foundations, Continuity, and Change

Continuity of spatial arrangements is a characteristic of Romano-Celtic sanctuary sites, so it is no surprise that Iron Age pits filled with offerings are often found below the floors of Roman cellae where idols stood. At Jouars-Ponchartrain, the idol base stood above an earlier offering pit, and at Mouzon, the base was constructed above a prehistoric hearth. The prehistoric menhirs encased in a cella at Triguerés and at Le Gué-de-Sciaux are no different in this respect. At Altbachtal, continuity between an earlier temple and a later one was provided by the re-use of an older dedication to Mercury as the base of a new idol of the god. In Chapter 6, we will see how the re-use of fragments of statues in cella floors and statue bases has been observed at Calès-Mézin and Kottenheim as well.[103]

These material links between the history of the temple and the idol it housed were another means of achieving agency, using what Gell would have described as an internalist strategy, in which fragments of older idols, secret substances, and relics are placed inside new idols.[104] Knowledge of these internal components and connections added to the mystique of the idol and connected it to the past, distracting worshipers from its man-made nature. In the case of the Romano-Celtic temples, the incorporation of older fragments of idols and cult images, or the placement of idols directly over older pits and other ritual features within the cella, linked the current idol with its older version, or with past forms of worship, and the older arrangement of the temple. This assured worshipers of the new idol's legitimacy and continued relevance. Because the divinity had always been worshiped on this very spot, or contained substances of an older idol, the idol's powers remained real in its current form.

Not only were idols placed at the heart of temple buildings, the foundations for their bases were often built below floor level, indicating that their position and size were known before the temple was complete. At sites like Crain (**Table 4.1**) and Mouzon (**Table 4.12**), the imprint left by the base in the mortar floor is the result of the floor being set around the base, while at sites like Bierbach (**Table 4.5**) and Puy Lautard (**Table 4.14**), massive blocks or conglomerations of stone and mortar served as socles. Thus the temple was built to house the idol, and not vice-versa. The idol's location was established prior to the construction of the temple, or at least before major renovations, such as the installation of a new floor, were completed. But many of these subfloor foundations seem excessive for the weight of the statue they supported, and many temples seemed to be able to do without them. So what were these foundations really for?

Perhaps the laying of a foundation for the idol's base represented an early ritual phase in the construction of the temple, much in the same way that the Romans defined sacred space through augury. The foundation below an idol's base marked the very spot where the divinity would be present, the holiest part of the temple. But there may have been other ritual or ideological considerations. For example, the foundations may have been a precaution against the perceived extra weight that divine presence bestowed upon the idol when it was consecrated. Substantial foundations may also have been symbolic of the permanency of the divinity's home, rooting the idol in the earth, and thus denoting its primacy over other movable objects within or outside the temple. The legal difference identified by Sylvie Estienne between a *simulacrum* and moveable *ornamenta* acquired after a temple's foundation is of obvious relevance here. The objects supported by the bases embedded in the floor were indisputably and forever part the temple's initial and indispensable inventory.[105]

In the Greek world, some idols were chained up in the temple, a feature intended to prevent the divinity from escaping or abandoning doomed cities, if for example the divinity should be called away in a rite of *evocatio*.[106] In some cases, the chains were meant to keep potentially dangerous divinities under control. At Rome, the idol of Saturn was bound with wool throughout the year, but was released during the Saturnalia.[107] The emperor Elagabalus chained the Palladium in the new temple of Sol Elagabal with golden chains, presumably to enforce his re-organization of Roman state religion around the sun god.[108] It is possible that the overly substantial bases of Romano-Celtic temples were meant as a means of securing divinities in their homes, though we have no indication of how statues were attached to their bases, such as dowel holes or pegs. While the bases may have been firmly rooted in the floor and rested upon solid underground foundations, the idols may have stood freely on them, as the Mercury and bull idol at Altbachtal, and the mother goddess in the Mars Lenus sanctuary did. This would have allowed them to be moved outside the cella for ritual washing and processions, topics we will turn to in the next chapter.

Though continuity and permanence were important elements in the homes of the idols, the status of images and the layout of temple interiors were not immutable. The alterations to the adyton of the mother goddess temple in the Mars Lenus sanctuary illustrate this point, even if the full meaning of the modifications is unclear. Improvements vowed by wealthy patrons would have been one cause of such changes, and repairs caused by natural damage to temples another. The Mercury temple in Altbachtal replaced an older circular structure from which part of its idol base, and perhaps the idol itself, were taken. The latter was a votive offering that had originally been designed for display against a wall or in a niche but that was now displayed in a setting in which it could be viewed from all sides. Its placement in the center of the new square temple suggests an elevation in its status. Even outdoor idols like the Jupiter-giant columns could be augmented by the addition of enclosure walls, as happened at Jouars-Pontchartrain.

Changes in the physical setting of cult images probably related to shifts in their popularity and the perceived efficacy of prayers and rituals addressed to them. The situation was analogous with the role of art in late Medieval and early modern Catholic and Orthodox churches. Within any large church or cathedral, regular ritual activity was focused around a tabernacle and an altar, the latter containing relics of the church's patron saint. Yet within the same church were side altars and radiating chapels, as well as ancillary statues and wall paintings depicting the Virgin Mary and the saints, and containers of more holy relics. These side chapels and works of art were often commissioned by wealthy patrons whose names were recorded in inscriptions on or near them. Visitors attended a mass celebrated on the high altar, but may also have chosen to pray or light candles in front of these ancillary altars, relics, and artworks. Over decades and centuries, some of these sideshows became major attractions in their own right, and various miracles were attributed to them. The most famous artworks and relics could be removed from their original places of display, and provided with new churches of their own.

In the Romano-Celtic sanctuary, not all cult images were stored under the roof of the same temple, but were nonetheless displayed in the same enclosed area. Visitors would approach the temple's idol, passing the various sculptural dedications on their way. These images provided previews of the idol they were about to see, while the presence of other divinities reminded them that they were going to see an idol that belonged to the realm of the gods. For reasons of convenience, or perhaps because they were related to their donors, they might also make sacrifices and perform other rituals in front of these secondary cult images as well. The presence of altars in front of secondary cult images, and the fact that many votive monuments took the form of altars, confirms that this was ordinary and expected behavior. Like the side chapels and relics of Christian churches, the votive statues could become important objects of veneration. Over time, they built up followings and reputations and they began to receive the higher honors that were due to full-fledged idols – a temple, an enclosure wall, and, of course, regular sacrifices.

Roman idols were not merely decoration for temple buildings, but rather the temples themselves were a functional backdrop that regulated and defined worshipers' interactions with the gods they housed. The architectural and spatial tricks, or "staging," that emphasized the importance of the idols, along with the preliminary glimpses of the idols that votive images in periphery locations of the temple enclosure provided, helped to bestow upon idols the very social agency that defined them. The wrapping of a constructed sacred space around idols is an important point against those who have downplayed their importance in Roman religion. But our picture of idols as they sat at home in their temples is still a very static one. To more fully re-create the temple effect, the next chapter looks at our evidence for how idols were used, and how temple visitors interacted with them.

FIVE

IDOLS IN ACTION

Having overviewed the space in which Roman idols lived, we may turn to the question of what happened there, and examine the interactions between idols and human worshipers. These activities represent the active lives of idols, and it is here that we see most clearly the sense of agency that worshipers bestowed upon them. As Roman temples were the homes of the gods, it is not surprising to find that interactions with idols often reflect the same kind of activities that took place in human households and in human social settings. The gods could be found and seen in their temples, but they were also fed, clothed, and bathed there, and, perhaps most importantly, received visitors.

Just as for human beings, the biographies of individual idols included important events, major changes, and profound experiences. Thus, for example, an idol might be moved from one temple to another, as was the case with the Juno of Veii, be struck by lightning, or be seen performing miraculous deeds such as moving, speaking, bleeding, sweating, or crying. Such prodigies are well documented for specific statues in the Greek and Roman Mediterranean world alike, and were an important part of the biography of any cult image.[1] Though no such events have been recorded for idols in Gaul and Germany, comparable stories probably existed there as well. Like their foundation and discovery stories, these specific events were important to worshipers' understanding of the history of their idols – another means by which they demonstrated agency. The focus of this chapter is not so much on these major events, but rather on the day-to-day and routine interactions of individuals with idols. Far more than the mythologies that surrounded them, the constant repetition of these daily rituals served to support and reaffirm the current divine status of the idol, and to distinguish them from other cult images.

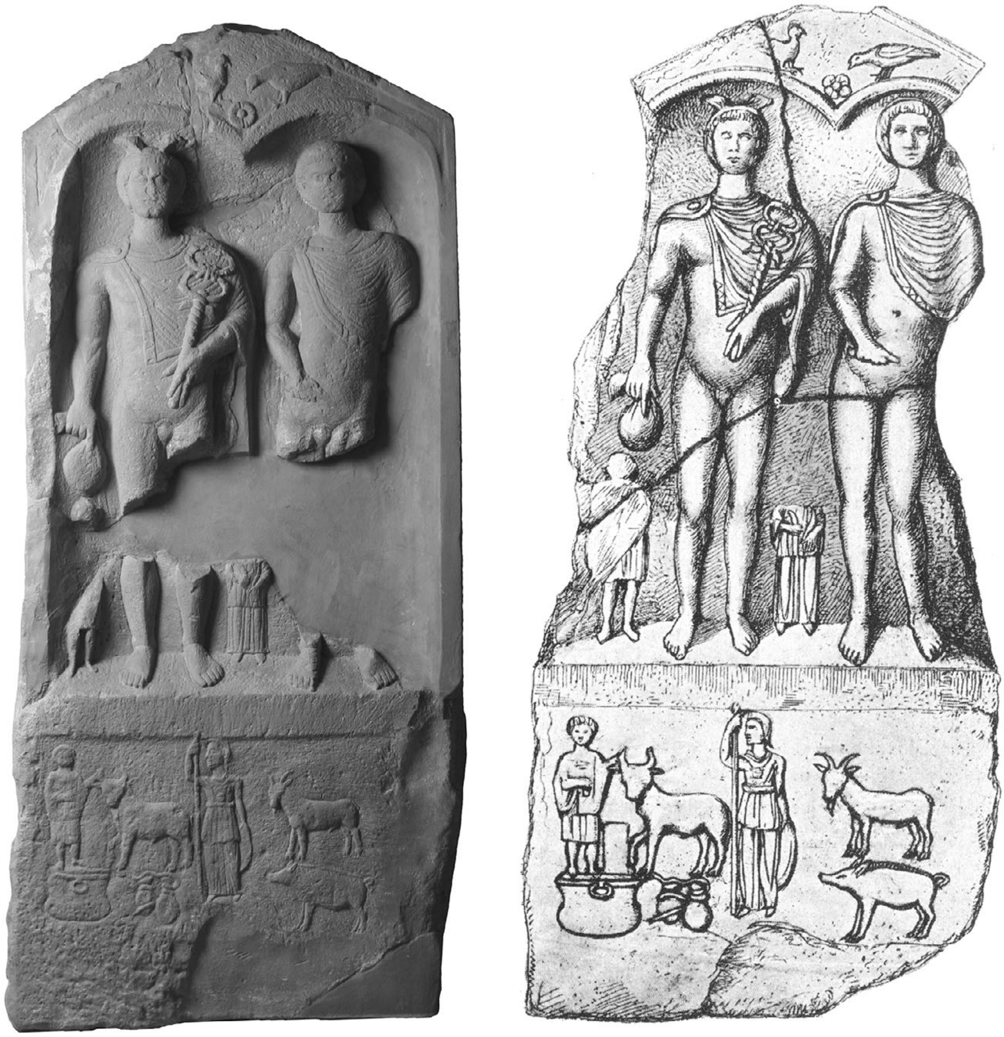
IDOLS AND EPIPHANIES

In her study of epiphany in the Greek world, Verity Platt examined a series of Greek votive reliefs in which worshipers are juxtaposed with the gods in temple settings. But are the representations of the gods in these reliefs meant to be statues, or the divinities themselves? In fact, Platt argues, they are both. The gods are depicted using conventions that imply that they are statues, notably being framed in a temple building, or as over-life size, but they are also represented in a naturalistic style, without statue bases, gazing and gesturing toward their worshipers. These latter aspects flout the usual conventions for the depiction of a statue. These reliefs, Platt contends, convey a message to temple visitors that sacrifices and other ritual activities are rewarded with an epiphanic experience.[2]

Anja Klöckner has recently collected similar scenes in Mediterranean Roman art, including reliefs, mosaics, and wall paintings, in which statues step down from their bases, attract the attention of animals, or otherwise interact with people or other statues in ways that suggests they are animated for at least a particular moment. Roman artists also break the usual conventions for depicting statues, such that they seem to simultaneously be depictions of statues and gods.[3] This sort of ambiguity in artistic representations reflects the way cult images were actually perceived.

Scenes of epiphany and animated cult statues can be found in the western provinces as well. On the relief of Cernunnos, Apollo, and Mercury at Reims, we are clearly looking at three statues framed in a temple (**Fig. 3.13**). The bottom half of Mercury is damaged, but Cernunnos sits on a high rectangular base, while the statue of Apollo, to his right, stands with his right leg firmly planted on a low plinth. Apollo's left leg, however, has stepped off of the base, as if the statue is stepping down from it and moving closer toward the viewer – a moment of epiphany in which the statue has come alive, and is fully imbued with divine presence.

On a stele found at Weiler (Keltern-Weiler, Enzkreis, Baden-Württemberg) in the sixteenth century we find another possible representation of an epiphany involving idols (**Fig. 5.1**).[4] The relief depicts an interaction between human worshipers, Apollo, Mercury, and Minerva, a common Romano-Celtic triad. In the center of the relief's lower register stands Minerva, probably a statue, attached to a square base and surrounded by the three animals of the *suovetaurilia*, a cauldron, and two amphorae with a snake wrapped around



5.1 Relief from Keltern-Weiler. Upper register: Apollo and Mercury in a niche with two tiny worshipers. Lower register: A suovetaurilia with statue of Minerva and worshiper, amphorae, and cauldron. Red sandstone, H. 79 cm. (Left: Landesmuseum Württemberg Inv. No. RL 389, Ortolf Harl; Right: Drawing from Haug and Sixt 1900, pl. 40)

them. A figure wearing a tunic stands directly in front of Minerva, holding the horns of the bull in his left hand and what is probably a sacrificial knife or axe in his right. A faint rectangular shape between this figure and the bull is almost certainly a representation of an altar, and the figure should probably be interpreted as the worshiper providing these gifts and making the sacrifice in front of the goddess. The cauldron and amphorae may well have been used in preparing the meal that followed the sacrifice, or could equally have been dedications. A number of metal vessels with votive inscriptions have been found in Gaul and Germany, including a bronze cauldron with a dedication to Mercury from the Otterstadt hoard.[5]

In the relief's upper register, Mercury and Apollo stand side by side in a double niche or apsis, the triangular pediment above them, in which stand a cock and raven, symbols of the gods, defines the setting as a temple interior. To the right of each god are tiny male and female figures in tunics, both so small that their heads only reach the knees of the gods. The gods lack any hint of a statue base, and stand on the very same floor as the humans, yet they have placed in the conventional architectural frame appropriate for depictions of statues. The artist has employed hierarchical scale to show that the humans feel a divine presence in the gods/statues, a convention that was also employed on a votive relief depicting Epona and a worshiper from Öhringen (**Fig. 5.5**). These reliefs are not, I believe, simple depictions of humans standing next to colossal statues, but rather humans experiencing an epiphany in which the statues appear in a size proportional to the immense power of the divinities. With this in mind, the excessively large foundations for idol bases observed in the previous chapter seem to make more sense – they were intended to support a divine weight that exceeded the real world weight of the images they supported.

Do artistic representations like the Weiler relief provide literal evidence for how individuals perceived an epiphany in a temple, or are they merely a symbolic affirmation that the divine nature of the idol was real? Perhaps they were both. In a fantastical description of the temples in second century Syria, Lucian paints a picture in which the statues of gods are routinely heard shouting inside the temple, moving, and in one instance taking flight.[6] Ancient readers are unlikely to have believed in this sort of humorous epiphany, but it is not impossible their own experiences involved some frenzied belief or vision in which they perceived statues as having moved or grown. Individual religious experience and perceptions would have been just as varied as belief in the divinity of idols, and cannot be reconstructed as a single universal law. What we can do, however, is examine what the experience of that interaction actually involved.

Interacting with Idols

In the previous chapter, we saw that many temples had the physical capacity to be closed to visitors. Some idols may have been routinely inaccessible, opening their homes to the public only on special occasions, while access to others was easily obtained. The idols of the Capitoline Temple in Rome, perhaps the holiest and most important of all Roman temples, seem to have been fairly easy to visit. In Chapter 1, we found Seneca mocking the practices of common worshipers before the statue of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva housed in the

Capitolium. These worshipers informed Jupiter of the time of day, named supplicants, and bathed and anointed him by making gestures that mimicked the action of anointing. Likewise, women pretended to do the hair of Juno and Minerva, while others held mirrors for the goddesses to see her reflection. The gods, Seneca goes on, have legal briefs read to them, and mimes perform to amuse them.[7] Some of these attentions may have been part of the routine care of the idol by professional temple attendants, but others were carried out by casual visitors. The general Scipio Africanus was one such casual visitor to the Capitolium, where he meditated alone before undertaking any private or public business.[8]

The Romans could pray and address the gods without using an image at all, but being in the presence of idols put worshipers in the presence of the gods in a very real way, and thus allowed for a very direct form of communication with the divine. In one of his letters, Seneca set himself and his correspondent apart from those worshipers who felt that proximity to the idol itself ensured more divine attention, and so sought to gain an edge over other petitioners:

> *Non sunt ad caelum elevandae manus nec exorandus aedituus, ut nos ad aurem simulacri, quasi magis exaudiri possimus, admittat...*
>
> We do not need to uplift our hands towards heaven, or to beg the keeper of a temple to let us approach his idol's ear, as if in this way our prayers were more likely to be heard.[9]

Evidently some temples had special servants (*aeditui*) who were charged with keeping worshipers at a respectful distance, and perhaps with good reason. Worshipers may well have desired to touch the gods, as well as whisper in their ears. Physical contact allowed for an even more direct appeal than mere proximity. In Plautus' *Rudens*, two weeping girls clutch the statue of Venus in a temple in supplication, and by the imperial period it was common for supplicants or escaped slaves to embrace the statues of gods and divinized emperors.[10] Servius records that worshipers touched the foreheads of statues as a means of accessing the divinity's mind (*genius*).[11] Cicero describes, albeit in Greek Agrigentum, a bronze statue of Hercules that was worn away from the kisses of its adorers.[12] The gesture was one that Cicero's Roman listeners could understand easily and required neither explanation nor justification. Physical contact with ritual objects was also an important aspect of Roman prayer. The officiants of Roman sacrifices and even regular worshipers would touch either the altar or the door of the temple.[13] In short, the physical presence of the idol, and proximity to it, mattered in ritual actions.

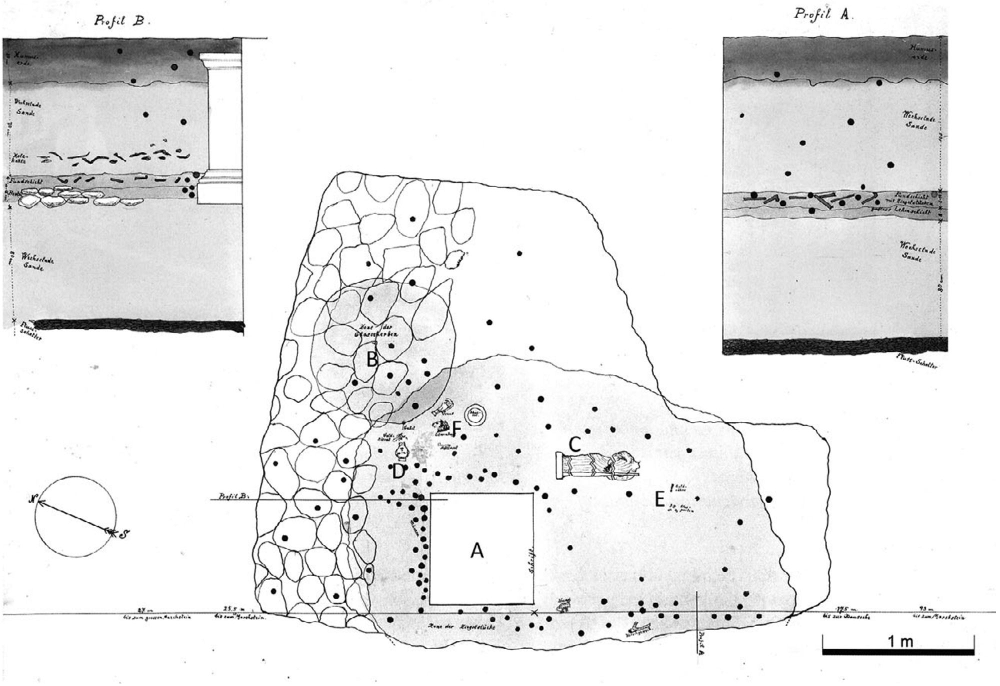
It is easy to interpret this desire for physical contact in terms of Frazer's contact magic, or Gell's "volt sorcery" in which the power of the idol was effectively transferred to the worshiper through touch.[14] But other forms of contact with idols suggest that these gestures also relate to the status of idols as the embodiments of a divinity. Kisses and embraces are not just the means of transmitting and receiving divine power as if it were electricity, they are also communicative gestures used by humans to convey human emotions, such as affection. As the physical bodies of the gods, idols were capable of experiencing and appreciating human sensations and gestures.

IDOLS AS DIVINE BODIES: ANOINTING, ADORNING DRESSING, CLEANING CULT IMAGES

Many of the rituals and gestures performed toward idols were proper to the care of a human body, and affirmed the perception that the idol was the embodiment of a divinity. Seneca describes individuals who stood before the idols in the Capitolium as making motions in the air as if they were anointing or hairdressing, but not actually touching the idols themselves. Presumably these worshipers were prevented from doing so by the temple attendants, and perhaps by the physical size of the idols, which put the heads and hair of the divinities well out of easy reach. But other idols did physically receive the sort of flattering attentions ordinary to flesh and blood bodies. Each May, the Arval Brethren anointed the goddess Dea Dia with perfumes.[15] In Sicily, the Diana of Segesta was regularly anointed with perfume and crowned with flowers.[16] These were real physical acts rather than the pantomime gestures observed by Seneca.

Most cleansing treatments seem to have served no function other than pleasing the divinity, but some ointments and treatments applied to idols were intended to preserve their appearance and to protect their constituent materials from the ravages of time. Oil was routinely applied to wooden and ivory statues to prevent cracking, and a mixture of wax and oil was used to preserve the red vermilion painted on many idols, including the Jupiter Capitolinus.[17] The idol of Saturn in Rome was routinely filled with oil to protect it from decay and to prevent cracking, and the used oil was collected for re-use in potions.[18] Practical maintenance of the appearance of statues was of the utmost importance, and it was always the first action of the newly elected censors to renew the red paint on Capitoline Jupiter.[19]

Archaeological evidence for the regular anointing of a provincial idol was found in temple 6 in the sanctuary complex at Thun-Allmendingen in Switzerland (**Table 4.16**, **Fig. 5.2**). The location of the Romano-Celtic sanctuary at Thun-Allmendingen is similar to Puy Lautard in that it lies on a road some distance outside the nearest settlement, but its internal arrangements are closer to Altbachtal (**Fig. 4.2**), with multiple small temples inside the ritual enclosure. As at Altbachtal, the sanctuary at Thun-Allmendingen was also covered in a deep layer of fluvial mud that resulted in an unusually good state of preservation. Occupied from the early first to late fourth centuries AD, the



5.2 Thun-Allmendingen, the interior of temple 6 from a 1926 excavation illustration, with find labels added: A) Base with Alpes inscription; B) Scatter of glass unguentaria sherds; C–D) body and head of the marble Annona statuette; E) Gold beads and glass pearls of necklace; F) Objects from cupboard: iron key, bronze escutcheon, mirror handle, terracotta Venus, and lion, jug, and bowl. The black dots are individual coins. (Martin-Kilcher 2009, fig. 3/5)

site included seven temple buildings, all of the simple rectangular type. In the late fourth century, or perhaps the early fifth, the sculpture from these temples was removed and systematically smashed, and select fragments of many cult images were buried in a pit in the middle of temple two (see Chapter 6). Perhaps because it had already become an overgrown ruin, or because the structure was considered haunted or dangerous, the floor of temple six, the largest temple at the site, was preserved relatively intact, escaping the systematic pillaging for building materials suffered by the other temples at Thun-Allmendingen.

The illustration of a trench dug in 1926 in the middle of temple six provides a remarkable window into the final conditions of the cella's interior (**Fig. 5.2**). A large limestone statue base imbedded in the temple's floor dominated the room (**Fig. 5.2A**). On the floor around it lay coins and other offerings, including a marble statuette of the goddess Annona (**Fig. 5.2C–D**).[20] An inscription on the front of the base reads: *ALPIBUS / EX . STIPE / REG(io). LIND(ensis)* – "To Alpes, from donations of the region of Lindensis." Only the inscribed side of the base was carefully polished, such that frontal viewing was clearly intended. There are no dowel holes or other attachments, and the top side was also left rough, indicating that it was completely covered by whatever it supported.[21] Dominating the interior of the temple as it does, this base can hardly have been intended for anything other than the temple's idol.

No trace of the idol of the Alpes that stood on the base was recovered. Either it was made of wood and has decomposed, or it was removed from the temple and was smashed or melted down before the temple building was finally destroyed. Thus we will never know for certain whether it was an anthropomorphic representation, like other divine mountain range personifications, such as the Vosges (Vosgesus), and geographical personifications like the Black Forest (Abnoba), or a realistic model of the Alps as they appeared on the horizon looking out from the site, as Anne-Marie Kaufmann-Heinimann has proposed.[22] Whatever its shape, its position in the temple made it the center of attention (see full plan in **Table 4.16**), while the small finds recorded around it reflect the sort of ritual treatments the idol received.

To one side of the statue base, and against the back wall of the sanctuary, was a large scatter of glass sherds (**Fig. 5.2B**), a terra sigillata bowl, a small jug, a mirror handle, a terracotta Venus, a fragment of a terracotta lion, and an iron key and bronze escutcheon (all, **Fig. 5.2F**). Presumably these last two items were part of a wooden box or cabinet in which the other objects were originally stored. The glass sherds belonged to at least forty *unguentaria*, small bottles and containers used to hold the expensive oils and perfumes with which the idol was anointed. The idol of Alpes possessed a mirror, in which she might be shown her reflection, just like the idols of Minerva and Juno in the Capitolium.[23] The contents of this cabinet represent the beauty kit of the Alpes idol, from which it received aesthetic treatments fitting for a female human body. This point alone seems to support the hypothesis that the lost idol was an anthropomorphic female personification.

Anointing and bathing required a priest or worshiper to physically handle the idol itself. At Saint-Aubin-sur-Gaillon (**Table 4.15**) and in the northern cella at Puy Lautard (**Fig. 4.15, Table 4.14**), steps in front of the idol bases enabled individuals to reach the idol itself, either to touch it while praying or to smear oil and perfumes onto it. Presumably the faces and heads of the idols in these temples could not be reached without the steps.

In addition to anointing, the ritual bathing and washing of idols was part of some cult festivals, and went beyond the mere maintenance of physical objects. Large statues were presumably washed *in situ* while other images were taken out in processions and bathed in natural bodies of water, or in special pools built for the purpose.[24] Idols of Magna Mater were regularly washed by her priests in rivers on March 27th each year.[25] The statue of Venus was also bathed on her feast day, the *Veneralia*, an event described in Ovid's *Fasti*:

aurea marmoreo redimicula demite collo,
demite divitias: tota lavanda dea est.
aurea siccato redimicula reddite collo:
nunc alii flores, nunc nova danda rosa est.

Remove the golden necklace from her marble neck,
Remove the jewels: bathe the goddess whole.
Dry her neck and return the golden necklace to it;
Then dress her with flowers and new roses.[26]

The bathing of idols was sometimes the special privilege of particular social groups. In the case of Venus, the task was left to the mothers and new brides of Rome. Similarly, the care of the statue of Fortuna Muliebris was left to newly married women.[27] Magna Mater was bathed by her priests, and upon completion of the goddess's bath, the chariot that had conveyed her to the river was also cleaned.[28] Within the cult of Isis, there were special priests and priestesses whose main task was the clothing of the idol after it had been washed.[29]

Tacitus' story of Nerthus, the Germanic goddess who traveled in a sacred wagon was discussed in Chapter 2. It will be recalled that the goddess' wagon, just like that of Magna Mater, was also washed in the sea at the conclusion of her ritual journey. Presumably comparable native traditions of bathing idols were present in the western provinces as well. Pools and basins found at sanctuary sites such as Fontes Sequana, Hochscheid, and Châteaubleu, are routinely identified as being used by pilgrims for ritual bathing, but there is no reason that they could not also have been used for washing idols.[30]

Pascale Linant de Bellefonds argued that the bathing and anointing of idols restored their potency in the same way Greeks and Romans saw bathing as renewing and invigorating the human body.[31] Certainly this idea fits well with the idea of idols as the embodiments of divinities, but these activities also renewed an idol's social agency in a two-fold manner. It put them at the center of a ritual, and thus made them the focus of attention. In their bathing habits, idols participated in a luxurious fashion in the Roman tradition of bathing, implying that they were members of society's upper crust, and thus could be expected to respond to their worshipers at least at this same elite level.

Just as the bodies of the gods required cleaning and maintenance, they were also clothed and wore jewelry. Their garments and adornments affirmed the concept of the idols' embodiment, further indicated their elite status, and could also recall some part of their mythological biographies. The practice is well attested in the Greek world, where the best known example is the newly woven *peplos* that was presented to Athena Polias in the Panathenaic Festival.[32] At Rome, Vertumnus had a set of rotating props and clothes, including a silk tunic, a turban, a toga, a peddler's tunic, a scythe, weapons, a lyre, nets, and a fishing rod. These accessories seem to have been routinely changed over the course of the year, and related to activities appropriate to different seasons.[33]

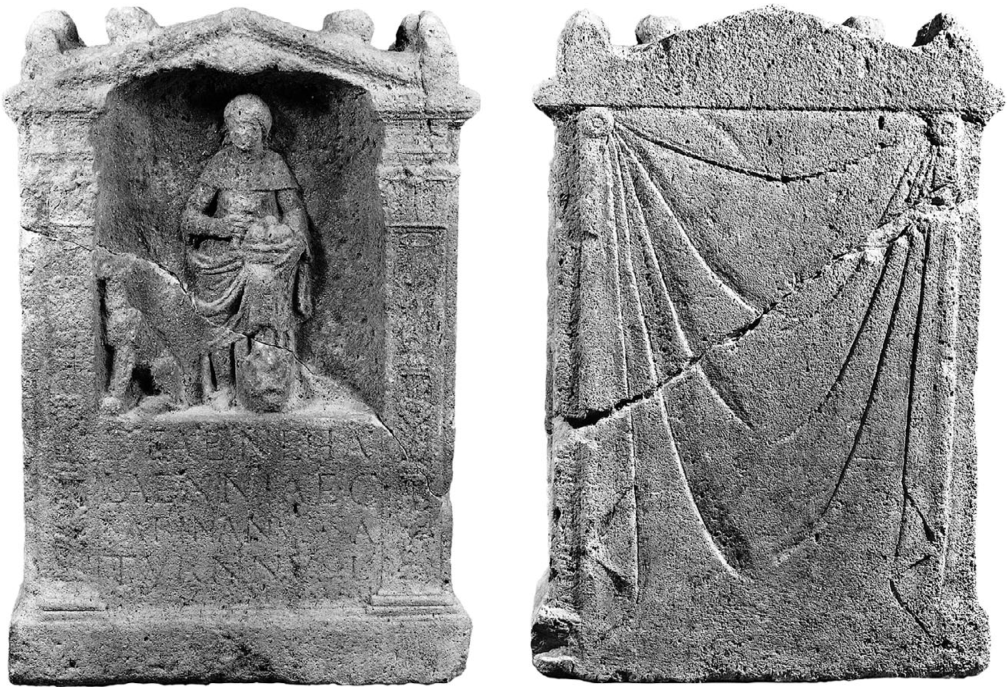
The clothing of other idols was more straightforward. The wooden statue of Fortuna from a temple in the Forum Boarium wore a toga that had once belonged to the king Servius Tullius, and the statue of Hercules Triumphalis in the same forum was dressed in triumphal robes on the occasion of triumphal processions.[34]

In the Germanic and Celtic world, the *Holzidole* were adorned with cloth garments and jewelry, as the scraps of wool on the *Holzidole* from Rebild and the golden ring on one the many statues from the sanctuary at Oberdorla indicate.[35] The massive silver torcs found at Trichtingen and Saint-Louis have been interpreted as the adornments of wooden statues, since they are far too large and heavy for a human.[36] At Temple M in the Martberg sanctuary complex (Rhineland-Pfalz), a fragment of a very thin silver torc plated with gold was probably intended for use on an idol or cult image, though it is unclear if it is of early Roman or late Iron Age date.[37]

Both in Rome and in her western provinces, the use of accessories seems to have been most common with primitive wooden cult images and early representations. Perhaps owing to the iconographic simplicity of these sculptures, they needed the extra clothing and adornment more urgently to convey their identities to viewers. The more plastic statues of the Hellenistic period onward depicted clothing, jewelry, and attributes by carving them directly into the body of the sculpture. The post-like *Holzidole* or wooden statues of early Rome, however, relied on detachable attributes, but this meant that the idols could be dressed or undressed to equip them for particular events, tasks or functions.

Even stone and metal images of later dates had their own clothing and jewelry, and the concept could be immortalized in stone. The back of some of the altars of Nehalennia from Colijnsplatt depict cloth hangings (**Fig. 5.3**), and the dressing of idols in white cloth during processions is described by Sulpicius Severus in the fourth century AD.[38] An inscription from the temple of Isis and Boubastis at Nemi records necklaces, bracelets, collars as well as linen tunics, a robe (stola), a silk vest, and a belt with silver plates that were shared by the divinities.[39] Some of these objects may have been temple treasures, but the care taken to document them suggests that they were part of a sacred wardrobe. In Late Antiquity, cult statues in Rome still wore jewelry. In AD 394, Serena, the wife of the general Stilicho, removed a necklace from a statue of Rhea Silvia (presumably Magna Mater), and wore it herself. This impious act, according to Zosimus, brought down the curse of a vestal virgin, leading to terrifying dreams in which Serena foresaw her own death.[40] Even at this late date, the jewelry of idols was still considered sacrosanct.

Epigraphic evidence for the addition of jewelry to statues in the Roman period includes an inscription from Riez (Alpes-de-Haute-Provence) from the first or second century AD. It records the dedication of a bronze statue of the



5.3 Votive altar of Nehalennia from Colijnsplatt (Holland) with the goddess in an aediculum on the front, and a cloth draping on the reverse. Limestone, H. 66 cm. (Stuart and Bogaers 2001, altar A56)

god Somnus to Aesculapius, along with a golden torc formed of intertwined serpents, a surgical tool, and some kind of cloak.[41] The socle of a bronze statuette from Châlons-en-Champagne records the dedication of a statue to the god Smertulitanus by a priest who had also arranged for two fibulae to be gold plated.[42] These two fibulae were surely objects worn by the idol rather than two of the many fibulae that had been left at the shrine as common dedications. The improvement of the wardrobe of Smertulitanus was one way in which the divinity could be flattered and its appearance subtly changed. Fibulae, of course, can only be worn if they are attached to cloth garments, so we must assume that Smertulitanus also had a wardrobe as well.

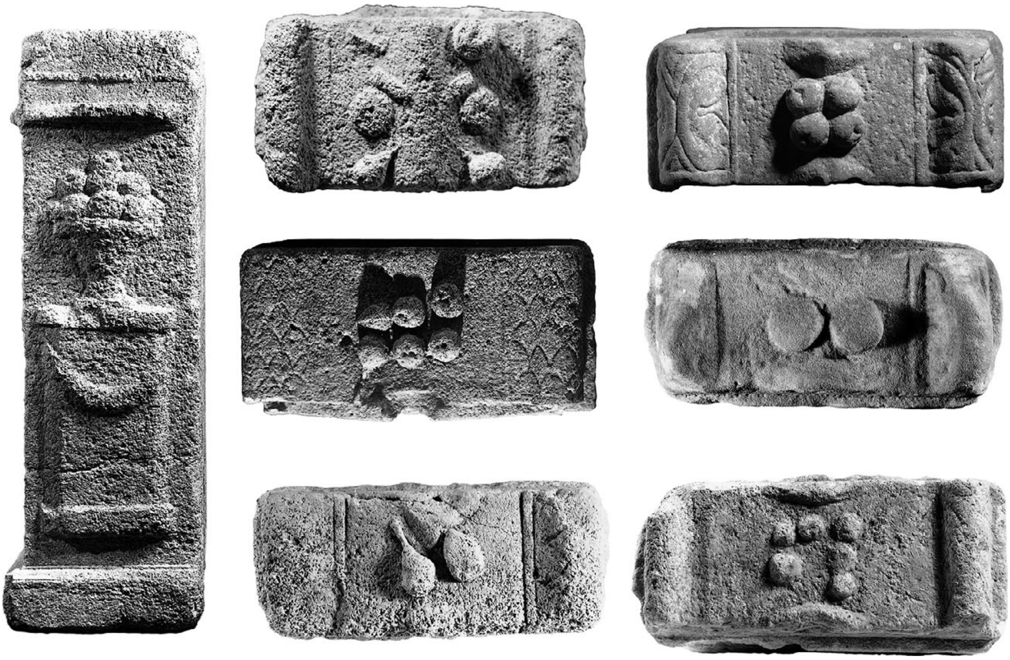
Jewelry found at some western temple sites may well have been worn by idols. On the floor of temple six at Thun-Allmendingen, a group of three gold tubes and five glass beads were probably strung together on a necklace worn by the lost image of Alpes (**Fig. 5.2E**).[43] Another necklace of glass beads and bronze lunar pendants was found in the pressed earth floor of temple C at Matagne-la-Grande and could also have adorned the idol there.[44] Of course, these two necklaces could simply have been donations, like coins or other valuables, and not actually worn by the idols. Even so, in a very basic sense, the presentation of a fibula or necklaces to a divinity becomes much more understandable if the divinity can potentially wear them, even if he or she chooses not to do so.

The fact that idols wore clothes and jewelry meant that they could be dressed and undressed, whether on a daily basis by temple servants or only on festival occasions. Just like bathing, dressing an image renewed the images potency and demanded interaction with human worshipers that affirmed its social agency. Just as humans are not expected to go about naked or in rags, idols were treated with garments fitting to their status, and subsequently acquired the expectation that they would perform and respond in a suitable manner. The point was not so much that the idol could be cold, or even needed to be dressed decently, but rather that these were appropriate gestures toward a divine guest.

NOURISHING IDOLS WITH FOOD AND DRINK

Just as idols needed to be clothed, bathed, and anointed, they also received nourishment in the form of food and drink. This included the entrails from animal sacrifices that were burned on altars, but also regular and festival dedications of foodstuffs. Ovid and other sources record a range of cakes, drinks, fruits, and other vegetable offerings that were given to divinities on their feast days.[45] At Rome, the idols of the city could be presented with banquets in response to prodigies or at times of crisis. This practice, known as the *lectisternium*, saw idols brought out of their temples, placed on banqueting couches, and served with food in a feast that lasted several days.[46] But in addition to such irregular events, individual worshipers could also make spontaneous food and drink offerings of their own.

Regular food offerings were sometimes placed on altars, where libations of liquids offerings were also poured. The tradition was immortalized by stone apples and pears carved on the top of altars dedicated to Nehalennia from the Colijnsplatt (**Fig. 5.4**). At Rome, the statue of Vertumnus had first fruit offerings and garden vegetables placed directly on it, but this seems to have been unusual.[47] Blanc suggested that the placement of food on altars instead of the base of the cult image stemmed from a period when Roman religion had altars but no idols.[48] Given that this pre-anthropomorphic phase is questionable, as discussed in Chapter 2, the explanation is not particularly convincing. Altars were the place where sacrificial meat and entrails were burned and thus “consumed” by the gods, so it made perfect sense that other food and drink offerings should be placed there as well. Burning food on the statue base would have endangered the idol, and even placing simple fruits there might have encouraged mice or other pests to approach too near to the holy object. There is also a basic sense of manners at play. We place food before our guests on tables, and do not spoon it into their mouths.



5.4 Altars dedicated to Nehalennia from the Colijnsplatt, Netherlands. On the left, the side of an altar bears a relief depicting a garlanded altar bearing a basket of offerings, H. 73 cm. On the right are the tops altars with representations of apples and other foodstuffs. (Stuart and Bogaers 2001, nos. B8, B53, B15, B61, B19, A15, A1)

Dionysius of Halicarnassus describes food offerings place on tables in front of the cult images in Rome:

> ἐγὼ γοῦν ἐθεασάμην ἐν ἱεραῖς οἰκίαις δεῖπνα προκείμενα θεοῖς ἐπὶ τραπέζαις ξυλίναις ἀρχαϊκαῖς ἐν κάνησι καὶ πινακίσκοις κεραμεοῖς, ἀλφίτων μάζας καὶ πόπανα καὶ ζέας καὶ καρπῶν τινων ἀπαρχὰς καὶ ἄλλα τοιαῦτα λιτὰ καὶ εὐδάπανα καὶ πάσης ἀπειροκαλίας ἀπηλλαγμένα· καὶ σπονδὰς εἶδον ἐγκεκραμένας οὐκ ἐν ἀργυροῖς καὶ χρυσοῖς ἄγγεσιν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐν ὀστρακίναις κυλίσκαις καὶ πρόχοις, καὶ πάνυ ἠγάσθην τῶν ἀνδρῶν ὅτι διαμένουσιν ἐν τοῖς πατρίοις ἔθεσιν οὐδὲν ἐξαλλάττοντες τῶν ἀρχαίων ἱερῶν εἰς τὴν ἀλαζόνα πολυτέλειαν.
>
> At any rate, I myself have seen in the sacred edifices repasts set before the gods upon ancient wooden tables, in baskets and small earthen plates, consisting of barley bread, cakes and spelt, with the first-offerings of some fruits, and other things of a like nature, simple, cheap, and devoid of all vulgar display. I have seen also the libation wines that had been mixed, not in silver and gold vessels, but in little earthen cups and jugs, and I have greatly admired these men for adhering to the customs of their ancestors and not degenerating from their ancient rites into a boastful magnificence.[49]

The placement of these tables and altars was within the line of sight of the gods, such that the idol could enjoy the food visually, if not actually eat it.

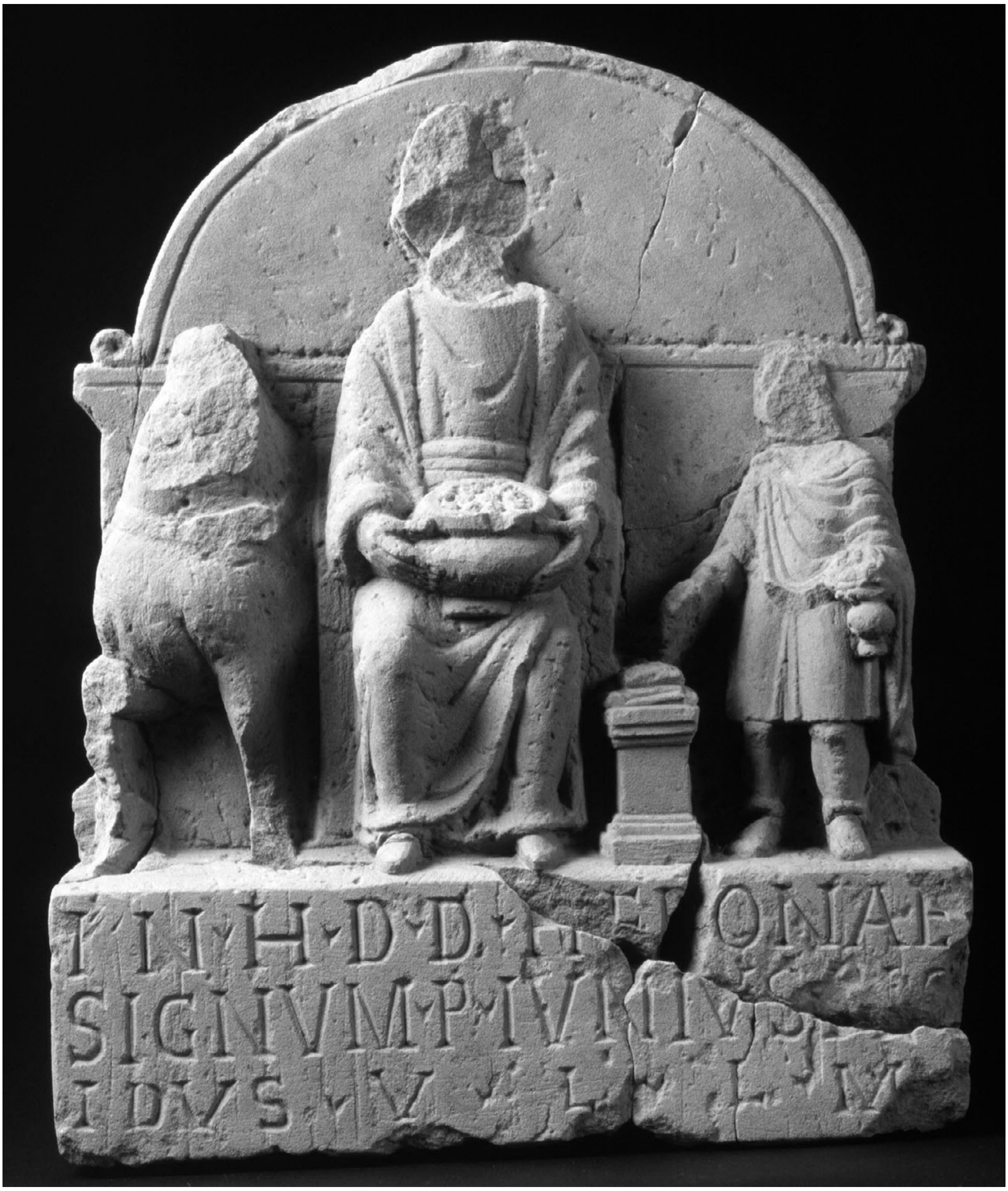
Naturally, these perishable gifts are known almost solely from textual accounts, and we have little corresponding archaeological evidence. The many fragments of ceramic containers found at temple sites probably include vessels that once contained offerings, but they are often identical to the vessels used in everyday life. Only special forms, such as incense burners and miniature pots, were made specifically for leaving offerings to the gods.

Roman artwork provides another source of evidence for food offerings. These include the aforementioned altars of Nehalennia, which show baskets of offerings on their sides, and piles of food placed on top of them, mostly apples and pears (**Fig. 5.4**).[50] Other cult images, such as Epona and the mother goddesses, are sometimes depicted holding baskets of fruit and bread, or with baskets of these items sitting next to them. In one sense the baskets were attributes representing the bounty offered by the goddesses, but may perhaps also have been symbolic of their reception of edible gifts from faithful worshipers. Statues and reliefs from the Mars Lenus temple complex at Trier, and the spring sanctuary at Fontes Sequana, show the temple visitors carrying food and other offerings in their hands.[51] Like the altars at Colijnsplatt, these monuments solidified in a permanent form the regular food offerings of temple visitors, an offering that was no different from other gifts brought to the divinity.

The sacrifice of animals and the pouring of libations provided nourishment for both the gods and their worshipers. Sacrificial scenes are common in Roman state reliefs, and appear on some western provincial votive images as well.[52] In both cases, the connection between the idol, altar, and worshipers is emphasized. The altar of Q. Caldinius Celsus, from the temple of the Matronae Aufaniae at Bonn (**Fig. 3.22**), depicts incense being burned on an altar in front of the goddesses, who are represented as small figures in a conch-shaped apsis above the altar. Two togati flank the altar while a camillus stands behind it holding an open incense box. Another relief from Öhringen (**Fig. 5.5**) depicts a libation being poured in front of a statue of a seated Epona. Both images are taken directly from the conventional Roman iconography of sacrifice, though the divine recipients are Romano-Celtic idols.[53]

RECEIVING GIFTS: PERISHABLE AND PERMANENT

We may divide other offerings brought to idols into two categories, those organic items that have left no trace in the archaeological record, and those more durable gifts that have. Though transient, the former were probably the most regular and common type of offering. The presentation of fresh flowers to Venus recorded by Ovid in his description of the *Veneralia* was probably a fairly standard practice for idols throughout the Roman Empire, and one that included the dressing of idols and cult images with garlands and floral crowns.



5.5 Votive relief dedicated to Epona from Öhringen in which a figure pours a liquid libation on an altar. Sandstone, H. 43 cm. (Photo: Archäologisches Landesmuseum Baden-Württemberg, Yvonne Mühleis)

In Roman Greece, Pausanias encountered various statues that could not be seen at all because they were buried in garlands and ribbons, and at one temple of Aesculapius at Titane, an image of Hygeia was obscured by the locks of hair which women had draped over the idol prior to marriage.[54] Propertius describes how the bronze representation of Vertumnus on the Aventine Hill changed its form as seasonal floral decoration and vegetable offerings were placed on and around it, a dress that seems to have been part food offering part clothing.[55] The practice was not dissimilar to that of dressing and undressing idols in clothes. Depictions of cult statues and sacred stones on wall paintings, terracotta reliefs, and even terra-sigillata vessels routinely show the sacred objects draped with garlands.[56] In the Golden Ass of Apuleius, Lucius twice encounters statues of the goddess Epona adorned with roses, and Epona herself is regularly depicted in relief with baskets of fruit and flowers.[57] These sorts of decorations should be considered in the broad category of gifts presented to idols, like the clothing and food offerings discussed above, and durable objects that have left a mark on the archaeological record.

The same tradition of leaving perishable gifts and vegetable offerings was also present in the western provinces, where garlands of flowers were sometimes immortalized by representation in reliefs on cult images, and on the sides of votive altars. These include the Jupiter columns and altars of Nehalennia, some of which have relief depictions of garlands and other vegetable offerings that would have been left on or wrapped around these cult objects in real life as well as in art (**Fig. 5.4**).[58] As at Rome, the renewal of flowers, garlands, and wreaths would have necessitated a continuous interaction between the idol and its regular worshipers.

In the category of durable offerings, inscribed sculptural dedications, like the cult images discussed in this book, represent only occasional and very expensive gifts. Most offerings took the form of small and low value objects such as coins, terracotta figurines, vessels, miniature objects, or items of jewelry such as fibulae or rings. Many thousands of these items are routinely found in the excavation of Roman temples. Like people, the gods accepted all kinds of gifts. Their ability to do so was yet another aspect of their worship that endowed them with agency.

The relationship between small finds, monuments, and buildings is a developing field of study in archaeology that presents numerous challenges as well as potential returns.[59] At sanctuary and temple sites, one major question is always whether accumulations of a particular type of low-value votive offerings found in a given area are indicative of repetitive rituals over time, or whether they were part of a single ritual of deposition involving many objects.[60]

The sort of structured deposits found in some temple interiors are exceptionally interesting, as they seem to reflect where small offerings had originally been placed in antiquity. At Puy Lautard, Thun-Allmendingen, and the more recently excavated sanctuary complex on the Martberg (Rheinland-Pflaz), coins were found clustered inside the cellae of the temples.[61] At Thun-Allmendingen and Matagne-La-Grande, coins were actually concentrated around the very edge of the idol bases such that some had probably once sat directly upon it (**Fig. 5.2**). Martin-Kilcher interpreted this distribution pattern at Thun-Allmendingen as the result of coins being thrown from the temple door by pilgrims aiming to land their coins on the idol or its base.[62] At Neuenstadt am Kocher, a single coin was wedged between the blocks making up the idol base, while other coins were recovered in spring basins just outside the front of the temple.[63] Even in the case of idols situated outside, such as the Jupiter column at Bavilliers, and the pillar-like monument at Jouars-Pontchartrain, coins seem to have been placed as near as possible to the monument by worshipers.[64]

While the cult of Mithras had its own peculiar rituals, it nonetheless seems to have shared the conception that the idol could be the recipient of small personal gifts. Recent studies of the spatial distribution of coin finds in Mithraea have identified accumulations of coins around the platform where the tauroctony was displayed at several Mithraea, suggesting that here too worshipers may have thrown coins in the direction of the idol. The many decades spanned by the coins at these sites has even led to the suggestion that they were intentionally left scattered in front of the tauroctony, creating a pattern of reflective dots on the floor.[65] While the idea of seeing another Mithraic light trick in these coin scatters is tempting, the more sober, and significant, conclusion is simply that the coins were stored or placed right in front of the tauroctony, and were knocked off when the Mithraea were destroyed. In Mithraism too, it seem that a gift's proximity to the idol mattered.

In just the same way that human goods and services could be purchased with money, divine favors and attentions were also for sale, or at least could be influenced by money. It was simply important that the divinity actually received payment, and just like prayers, proximity to the recipient was the best way of assuring that the gift was received. Placing a coin or other offering near the idol ensured that it reached its recipient, and effectively allowed such transactions to take place. The belief the idol might want, need, or be pleased by coins, jewelry, and other gifts was essential to the entire process.

As the anthropologist Marcel Mauss long since observed, gifts create a sense of obligation in their recipients, who feel compelled to make a counter gift, creating a system of reciprocity that is infused in all aspects of society, including religion. The basic assumption of Roman worshipers was that their gods felt a similar sense of obligation, and their small gifts were expected to generate a more generous response.[66] That many of these gifts were pleasing to the senses – food, drink, perfume, etc., or could be worn on the body – clothing, jewelry, etc. – reflects a sense that idols functioned on some level like humans, being capable of enjoying these gifts and of responding to the giver.

This line of reasoning was constantly reinforced by the fact that temple visitors could see other worshipers nearby making similar gifts to the idols, and making similar assumptions about the power of the idols. Thus it should not be surprising that very large numbers of the same types of votive offering are often found in large numbers in the excavation of single temples.

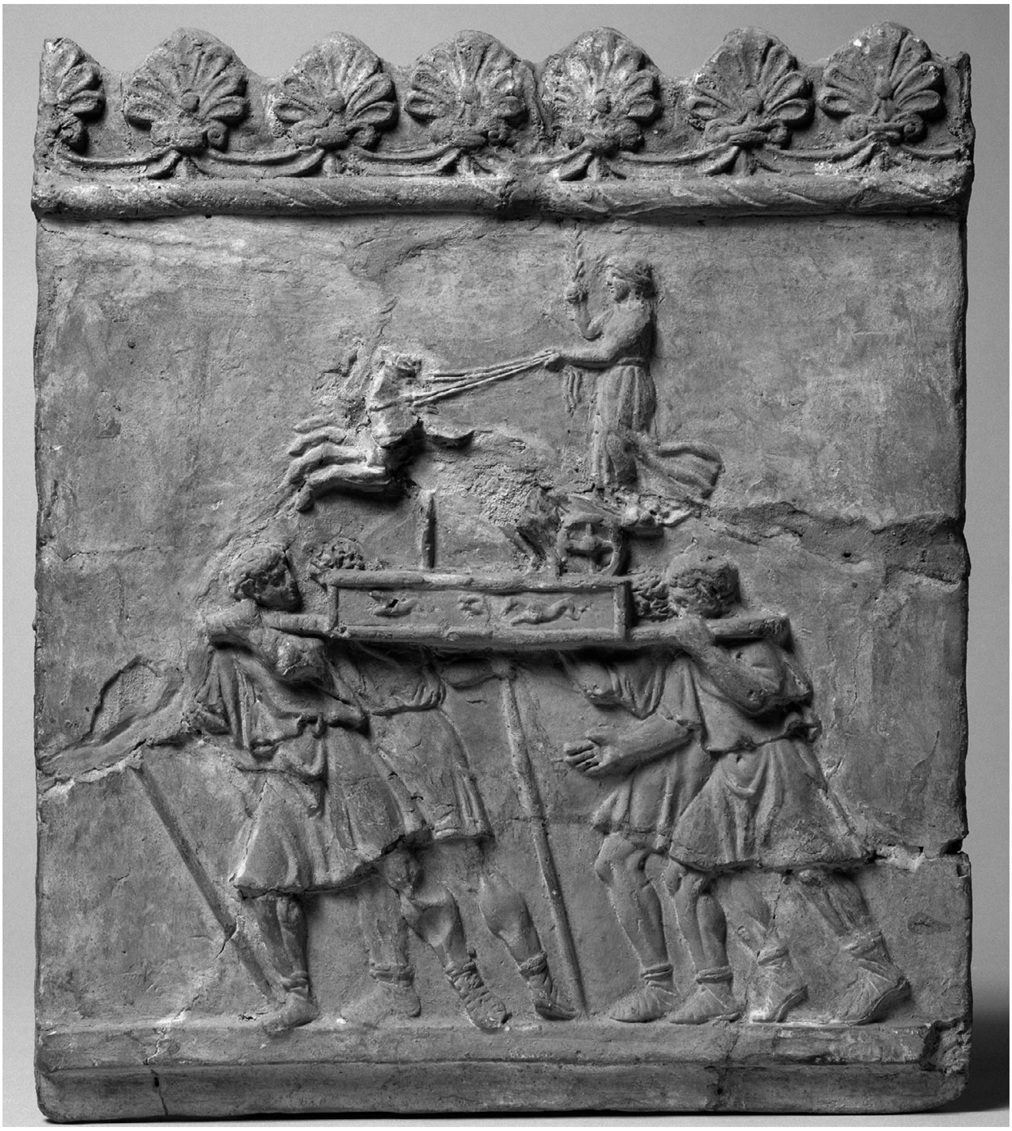
IDOLS ABROAD: PROCESSIONS

However freely individuals could enter temples, the amount of space inside them precluded large numbers of people from seeing and interacting with their idols. From our survey of Romano-Celtic temples in the previous chapter, the very largest temples had between 40 and 48 m^2 of free space around the idol base in the cella (see **Table 4**). This might allow for 40–50 people in cramped conditions to stand inside the temple, provided there was no other furniture taking up space in the room. Most of the other temples observed had well under half that amount of free space.

For major events involving larger numbers of worshipers, such as animal sacrifices, it was necessary for activities to take place outside the temple. The divinity was included by opening the temple doors, and allowing the idol both to see what was going on, and to be glimpsed by worshipers from afar. But in both Rome and the provinces, idols and other cult images were also carried outside of the temple in processions on special occasions. These processions allowed the public to see the idol outside of its home, and for the idol to attend events, be bathed, or to visit other parts of the city.

The regular bathing of the idols of Venus and Magna Mater in natural bodies of water began with just such a procession, but when idols were too large to be moved, smaller substitutes could take their place. Brian Madigan has published a comprehensive study of cult images and other objects that were used exclusively in processions and public spectacles in Rome.[67] Relying mainly on artistic depictions of processions, Madigan termed these portable images "ceremonial sculptures," and grouped them into four main categories: processional statuettes, litter statues, *capita deorum*, and *exuviae*.

Processional statuettes were small hand-held images that probably copied the form of larger idols fairly closely, and were carried by upper class male youths in public parades. As the public would have seen the bearers as much as the statuettes, the task of carrying them was probably considered a high honor.[68] Litter statues were somewhat larger representations of the gods, and were carried at shoulder height by ordinary people on wooden litters or stretchers (*fercula*) in the processions leading up to games, circuses, and in the inaugural procession of consuls (*processus consularis*).[69] A terracotta relief from the Augustan period, probably made in or near Rome and now in Paris, depicts such a *ferculum* carrying a statue of Sol. As in other depictions of litter statues, the men carrying it hold staffs that were probably used to prop up the heavy litter during pauses in a procession. The back left litter bearer in the terracotta plaque is shown in the act of retrieving his staff, at the moment when the procession is about to resume (**Fig. 5.6**).[70] The attention of the viewers would have been focused on the raised statue, such that the task of carrying it was not particularly desirable. The simple tunics of the bearers



5.6 An Augustan period terracotta relief showing an image of Sol being carried on a ferculum. H. 38 cm, W. 35 cm. (Musée du Louvre, Paris. Inv. No. CP 4324. © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY)

suggest they come from much lower classes than the togate bearers of the processional statuettes.

The *capita deorum* were busts of divinities that were placed on couches (*pulvinaria*) at the Roman *lectisternium* and that were used in certain rites of the goddess Isis.[71] The *exuviae* were the attributes of the gods, which were transported in wagons to circus games and theatrical performances in special boxes shaped like temples. Once they had reached their destination, they were taken out of the boxes and placed on couches and thrones where the gods could view the proceedings and be seen by spectators. Whether the *exuviae* were detached attributes from the idols of temples themselves, or were designed solely for this purpose, is unclear. These objects were *pars-pro-toto* idols that provided the gods with a token presence at public events and spectacles.[72]

Secondary cult images played a major role in the processions of the cult of Isis. The *Navigium Isidis*, which occurred on March 5th each year, consisted of a procession of multiple images of divinities and the attributes of the Egyptian goddess Isis. The event celebrated the mythological departure of Isis by ship in search of her husband Serapis, and reached a climax when a model ship filled with offerings was set adrift in the sea. It concluded at the temple of Isis, where the processional images and regalia were returned to the temple, and the participants venerated a silver statue of the goddess on the temple steps.[73] Though these images and objects were treated with the utmost respect and veneration, filling in for the goddess and related divinities, none of them were the actual idol of Isis from the temple.

In the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius, in which our best description of *Navigium Isidis* is found, we also have an instance of an idol that traveled continuously. During his adventures while in the form of a donkey, the hero of the story, Lucius, falls into the hands of a group of traveling *galli,* priests of the goddess Cybele. These priests transport an image (*simulacrum*) of Cybele about with them, begging, telling fortunes, and conducting other fraudulent business. The statue, which is dressed in a silk robe, is eventually given to Lucius to carry.[74]

After a while, the traveling *galli* are arrested for stealing a golden cup from another temple of Cybele in one of the towns they have passed through. When accosted, the *galli* attempt to blame the goddess herself for taking the cup, which they had hidden in the traveling idol's robes. After they are dragged off to prison, their idol is consecrated in the treasury of the temple from which the cup had been stolen.[75] The biography of this fictional cult image thus undergoes a significant change. While traveling with the priests, it served as a sort of homeless idol, around which their rituals and worship were conducted. It was bestowed with social agency to such an extent that it could even be blamed for crimes! Once dedicated in a proper temple of Cybele, however, it became a subordinate cult image, a mere *ornamentum.*

Tacitus' description of a cult of Isis amongst the Germans suggests that similar processions were known there as well, as does his tale of the goddess Nerthus.[76] In Gaul, processions involving statues of divinities occurred well into late antiquity, much to the chagrin of Martin of Tours. In one instance, seeing a funeral procession in the distance, the saint mistook it for an idolatrous rite:

> *tamen quia rusticam manum cerneret et agente uento lintea corpori superiecta volitarent, profanos sacrificiorum ritus agi credidit: quia esset haec Gallorum rusticis consuetudo, simulacra daemonum candido tecta uelamine misera per agros suos circumferre dementia*

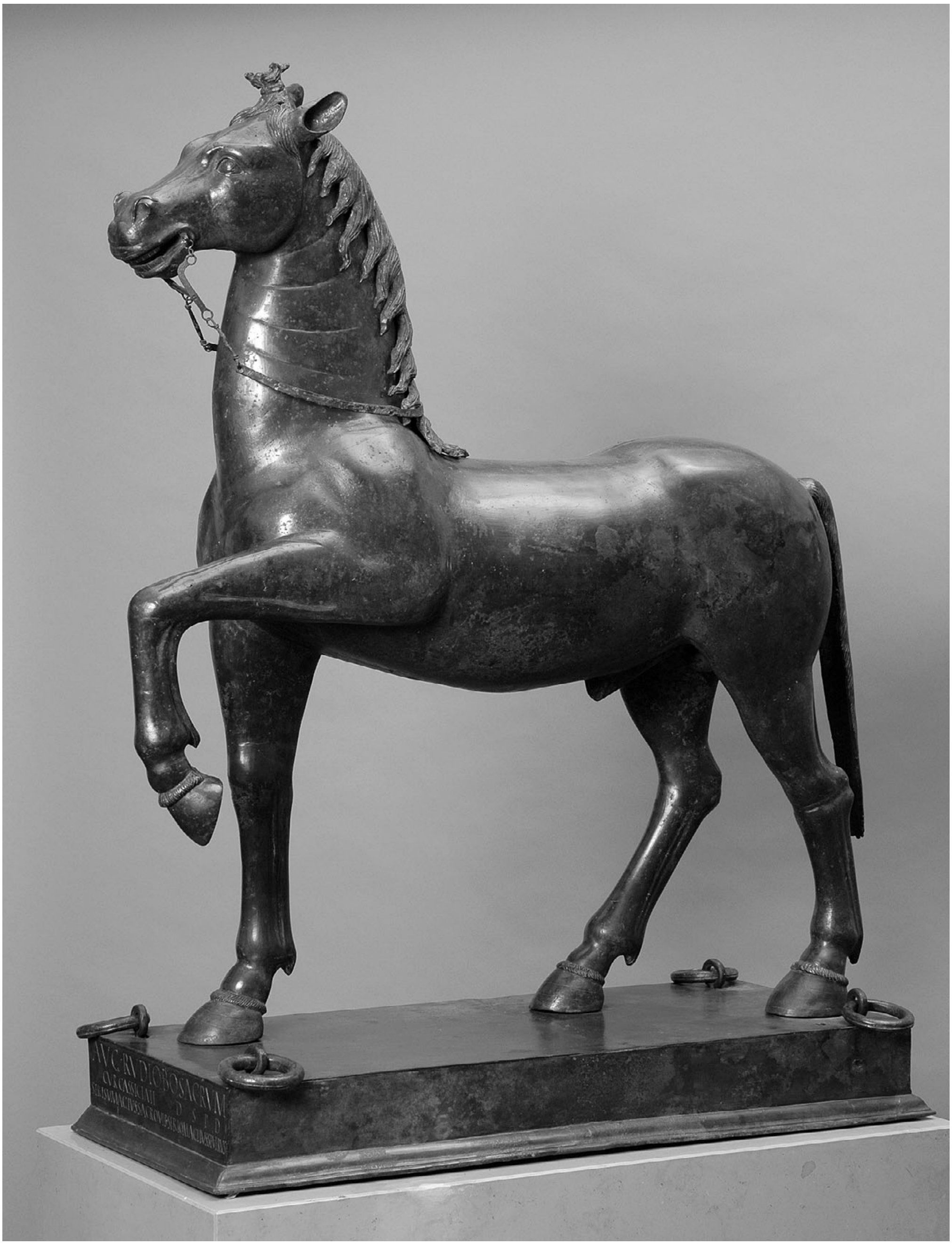
> However, because he could see a group of peasants and the linen cloths laid over the corpse fluttering in the wind, he thought that they were performing pagan sacrificial rites, for it was the custom for the peasants of Gaul, in their pitiable delusion, to carry demonic representations, covered with a white veil, over their fields.[77]

Just like the Cybele with its silk robe carried by Lucius, the idols of the fourth century Gauls were draped with cloth when removed from their temples. About a century later, similar rustic processions in northern Italy are mentioned by Maximus of Turin, and feature in the hagiography of Simplicius written by Gregory of Tours.[78]

The famous temple treasure found at Neuvy-en-Sullias (Loiret), discovered in 1861, contained good candidates for Romano-Celtic processional images. In addition to smaller figurines depicting animals, dancers, and divinities, the hoard included larger bronze animals that were likely used on processional standards. These consist of four boars, one of which is nearly life-sized, a headless bovine figure, and a stag, all of which were meant to be carried atop poles. The boars and bovine figure were constructed out of beaten plates of bronze, much like the Warrior from Saint Maur or the God from Bourray (see Chapter 2), suggesting a late Iron Age date of manufacture, and recalling Tacitus' description of the images of animals carried by the Batavians in battle.[79] The most impressive processional image from Neuvy-en-Sullias, however, was a large bronze horse (**Fig. 5.7**).

Now one of the most celebrated monuments of Roman France, the horse from Neuvy-en-Sullias probably dates to the late first century BC or early first century AD. It is made of cast bronze with engraved details, and like the animal standards in the hoard, attention was paid to completing the underside of the body, such that it could be viewed from below, as well as the top and sides. The posture of the horse, with one foot raised, is reminiscent of Roman cavalry statues, but although the horse wears a bit with reins, there is no trace of a rider. The votive inscription on the socle identifies the statue as a dedication to the otherwise unknown Celtic divinity Rudiobus.[80] It must remain a matter of speculation whether Rudiobus was the horse itself, had the horse as one of his attributes, or was an organic idol that rode on the horse without leaving any kind of a mark.

The four rings near the corners of the horse's socle were used to carry it in processions. As the rings are currently oriented, poles could be run through them parallel to the flanks of the horse, as the left rear hoof blocks poles from crossing the shorter sides of the socle. Thus it would have been carried much like the statue of Sol in the terracotta relief depicted in **Fig. 5.6** or the other litter statues of ancient Rome. But a hole in the upper surface of the socle, just in front of this rear hoof, and a worn patch on the hoof itself, suggest that the current arrangement is secondary, and that the horse was originally carried



5.7 Horse at Neuvy-en-Sullias. Rings mounted on the base indicated that the statue was designed to be carried on poles in processions. Bronze, H. 112.5 cm, L. 88.5 cm. (Hôtel Cabu, Musée d'Histoire et d'Archéologie, © François Lauginie) with poles that crossed the short sides of the base. Perhaps the socle began to break at this point, necessitating the ring's movement and a change in how the horse was carried. The rings could also have been used to suspend the horse by chains or ropes, or to allow it to be hoisted to a height at particular significant ritual moments.[81] Yet another alternative is that the rings assisted in strapping the horse it into a cart (*tensa*) in which it might be transported on longer trips, much like the image of Nerthus. In any case, the horse from Neuvy-en-Sullias was clearly designed to be moved fairly regularly, presumably in processions.

In both Rome and the provinces, and regardless of the shape they took, the various processional images all shared a common purpose – they allowed the divinity to be carried out from the temple and into the community. Presumably this meant that the agency associated with the temple's idol was transferred to the processional image, if only for the short duration of time that it was in use. There is no ancient testimony describing these processional images as being temporarily divine, but exactly such a structure exists in the Hindu world, to which we may now turn.

INTERACTIONS WITH IDOLS AND IMAGES IN ROME AND INDIA

Our knowledge of Roman rituals, and the place of images within them, is naturally patchy because it is derived from a combination of anecdotal textual, epigraphic, and archaeological sources. If we really want to try to access the mindset of Roman worshipers, we must follow the lead of the anthropologists, and look to a living culture to provide a frame of reference against which we may interpret the Roman phenomenon. Though many other cultures seem to share similar practices to the Roman worship of idols, as discussed in the introduction, I will limited myself here to a comparison with Hindu India. As in Rome, idols (*murti*) play an important role in Hinduism, where the specific honors and devotions paid to images of the gods by worshipers are referred to as *puja*.

Routine devotion to the images in the sanctum of a Hindu temple, or even in a domestic shrine, includes offerings of food, drink, and gifts, anointing, bathing, and decoration with flowers by ordinary worshipers.[82] All of these activities are very similar to those interactions with Roman idols described above. Most Hindu idols have a daily routine of dressing and undressing and receiving *puja* that is carried out by priests and temple visitors. The same sort of fixed routines existed in the daily lives of Roman idol as well. Thus we read of the morning awakening of the idols of Isis in the Roman world, the *deae matutina salutatio* –"morning salutation to the goddess" in Apuleius.[83] In both cultures, other activities occur only on irregular festival occasions. For example, in March and April, images of Vishnu are removed from their temples in Madras and taken bathing in the sea, much like the statues of Venus and Magna Mater in Rome.[84] As in Rome, these acts assume that the body of the god, the idol, has the same senses and perceptions as a human body, and thus enjoys similar stimulations and treatments.

Comparanda to Roman processions with idols and ceremonial sculptures are also easy to find on the Indian subcontinent. As in Rome, the central images of Hindu temples are sometimes removed from the sanctum of their temples and carried in processions. For example, in the festival of Ratha Yatri, the three wooden idols of the Jagannath temple are transported in chariots to visit another temple and its idols, re-enacting mythological stories about the relationships between these divinities. Elsewhere, temporary processional images are used, as is the case in the Ganesh Chaturthi festival, where clay images of Ganesh are sunk into the sea at the conclusion of a nine day festival, a remarkable parallel to the conclusion of the *Navigium Isidis*, in which a ship filled with offerings was launched into the sea.[85]

Some Indian temples possess bronze sculptures that are used only for processions. In the festival of the Chittarai, bronze images of the goddess Minaksi and her consort Siva Sundaresvara are paraded through the streets of Madurai. The procession re-enacts events in the story of the goddess, her conquest of the world, and her marriage to Siva, with the same bronze sculptures being employed in the procession each year, and returned to the temple upon its conclusion.[86] Hindus make a distinction between these bronze processional images, known as *ustava murti*, "festival images," and the immovable image stored in the temple's sanctum (*mulasthana*). For most of the year, the bronze *ustava murtis* are stored on the edges of the temple's sanctum, and do not receive regular *puja*.[87] On festival occasions, they are dressed and adorned with flowers and garlands before leaving the temple in a procession. Joanne Waghorne has argued that the very act of dressing these processional images serves to animate them with the divine presence, and enables them to carry the divinity outside the temple.[88]

These *ustava murti* are comparable to the ceremonial sculptures documented by Madigan in the Roman world, including the processional images described in Apuleius' description of the *Navigium Isidis*, and objects like the horse and animal ensigns from the Neuvy-en-Sullias hoard. They were simply stored in temples for much of the year, only becoming divine when needed for activities outside of the temple, where the main idol cannot go. The bases at the sides of the doors in temple 1/2 at Trier Altbachtal (**Table 4.1**) may well have been used to support such processional images.[89] Perhaps like Indian *ustava murti*, these Roman processional images were activated by dressing and adorning them, as was the expectation of Martin of Tours when he saw a procession of objects wrapped in white cloth. For a short duration, these specialized ceremonial sculptures were accorded the same sort of sense of social agency and treatment that was offered to permanent images.

Indian processions may re-enact mythological events, or re-tell stories about the divinities, as did Roman processions, but they also present an opportunity for *darshan* to those who cannot visit the temple itself, or who simply chose not to do so.[90] On one level, these parades of the gods were a simple form of advertising, retelling the story of the cult in an extravagant way. On another level, processions were a normal way for the inhabitants of a city to behave. Just like humans, the gods could not be expected to sit in their house all day long, and day after day. By attending games, political events and other activities, and simply by moving around the city, Roman idols were actively involved in human affairs, and became participating members of the local community. They were more than just artworks locked away in a special building.

More broadly, the mindset of Hindu *puja* is one in which the worshiper assumes the attitude of a servant to the divinity in his or her idol, or that of the host of an important guest, continuously employing gestures of respect and humility.[91] But the image is being accorded honors and treatments appropriate to humans, and to human bodily needs in particular, not necessarily because the divinity requires or needs them, but because this is the correct way to treat a distinguished visitor. An idol does not need to eat or drink, but it would be impolite not to offer it refreshment. A divinity might abandon a *murti* through lack of regular *puja*, but this does not mean the divinity ceases to exist. As Diana Eck puts it, the human language of honor is being employed in addressing the gods in the form of their idols because it is the language in which humans communicate best.[92]

Early Christians criticized Roman pagans for their treatment of non-living idols as living beings. If the idols needed humans to feed them, how could they be powerful divinities? But this is not quite the point. Both Hindus and Romans perceived idols as containing the divinities they represent. In India, divinities are invited to inhabit images either temporarily or permanently through acts of consecration, and the belief that the idol is an embodiment of the divinity makes acts of *puja* understandable. The acts of *puja* do not so much reflect the divinities needs, and thus indicate a weakness on the part of the god, but rather are the correct form of communication with it, and in this sense the very point of a *murti*, or indeed a Roman idol, is to enable such communication.

The Roman language of communication with idols was equally human in nature, which suggests a similar conception of divine embodiment. The same attentions and treatments were applied to idols that were used for wealthy and powerful members of Roman society. The worship of idols was a performance that reproduced Roman social hierarchy, placing the gods on the very top of a human ladder. In the human world, poor Roman clients might bring small gifts to their wealthy patrons. These patrons did not necessarily need the gifts, and could certainly buy or obtain them for themselves, but the gesture was an important part of the client-patron relationship, reinforcing the position of the two parties. Similarly, the gods who inhabited Roman idols did not necessarily need the expensive clothes and jewelry, perfumed oils, and gifts of food, but these actions were still considered the right way to treat the gods. As gestures, they affirmed and maintained the relationship between the gods and humans. In such a relationship, of course, worshipers could also expect their attentions to inspire a reciprocal gift or favor.

Thus the rituals involving idols in Roman temples, and their regular appearances in processions, endowed them with agency and enabled communication with the gods. Their biographies as objects might easily last hundreds of years, and include degradations, restorations, and improvements, as well as shifts in their status and movement from place to place. But it was because they were regularly and repeatedly treated with honors normal to humans by communities and individuals that idols achieved and retained social agency and hence divine status. Many Hindus believe that the divinity of an idol will be lost if it is not nourished with regular *puja*, and the same was likely true in the Roman world as well.[93] Without seeing priests and other worshipers conducting the regular rituals that sustained an idol, individuals lost the sense that the idol was something more than just an object. In the next chapter, we will examine how idols could lose their honored place in society, and the fates of those idols and other cult images that had lost both their agency and divinity.

SIX

THE END OF IDOLS

INTRODUCTION

> I therefore believe that the fragmented, mutilated state of much ancient art may then, at times, be explained as the consequence of a willful, purposive reaction to those provocative messages of power and persuasion expressed by the particular iconography, by the precious material and by the prestigious setting of the work of art.[1]

As Carl Nylander observed, the intentional destruction of images by foreign powers, or oppressed classes of society, is a phenomenon that occurs throughout history, and can reflect reactions to the ideologies that artworks communicate. The destruction of political images, especially imperial portraits, known as *damnatio memoriae*, is a well-known and documented phenomenon in the Roman world, but was motivated primarily by political rather than religious reasons.[2] In this chapter, the images under consideration were destroyed and damaged not so much because they represented foreign enemies or political persons, or even because of their iconography, valuable materials, or prestigious settings, but because they had a religious value. It was the agency possessed by Roman cult images that most often led to their eventual destruction.

The very nature of archaeological evidence is such that few cult images or idols have survived at all, and in Gaul and Germany, most temple sites yield no sculptural remains whatsoever. All cult images underwent processes of destruction and deposition that effectively marked the end of their biographies as cult objects, though not, of course, their stories as archaeological artefacts. The very actions that were meant to remove many sculptures from circulation, such as throwing them in wells, were often also the cause of their long-term preservation. In the case of cult images, these end-of-life processes included special destructive attention that went beyond the need to collect building material, create lime, or recycle valuable metal.

While this kind of destruction and deposition has obscured the evidence for the original placement of cult images, it is sometimes suggestive of a distinction that was made between idols and other cult images at the moment of their destruction. Since some images were more intensively attacked than others within single temple sites, we may hypothesize that the different treatments were due to different levels of perceived agency. As we shall see, the need to destroy cult images was predicated on a strong belief in the power and efficacy of idols, a belief that was held both by their worshipers and their enemies alike.

Just like the creation of a new idol, the end of an idol's life, or its loss of agency, could occur any time. We have already seen that many of the cult images and idols of the Iron Age were destroyed or mutilated either in the Iron Age itself, or in the early Roman period. At Roquepertuse, the cross-legged warriors were decapitated either in the late third century BC, or at the end of the second. At Glanum and Entremont the destruction of statues is more firmly connected with the Roman military actions of 125–3 and 90 BC.[3] The *buste-socle* from Molesme was buried in a pit during the reign of Tiberius, and the Warrior from Maur was disassembled and carefully buried about the same time. Were these idols being punished by enemies, or discarded because they had somehow failed the people they had been supposed to protect? This same question arises in virtually every case of cult image destruction in the Roman period.

This chapter focuses on late antiquity, the best documented and most prolific period of cult image destruction and idol death. It is also a period in which it is almost impossible to separate the end of idols and other cult images from the destruction and final abandonment of their homes, the temples. From the late third to late fourth centuries AD, activity at most temples in the Roman West began to decline and eventually stopped, though a small number of sites were abandoned as early as the first and second centuries.[4] This phase of abandonment is often marked by a layer of ash and other debris suggestive of a violent end. We usually assume that it was in this period of violent destruction that the majority of idols and other cult images were intentionally smashed, buried, thrown into pits and wells, or otherwise disposed of in or near the sanctuaries and temples that had once housed them.

By the time of their demise or abandonment, most temples had undergone several phases of re-modelling and renovation that would have affected cult image use. Most would also have accumulated an array of older and younger cult images of stone, metal, and even wood over a period of 200–400 years.

There is no reason to suppose that some of the idols of the Iron Age were not still present in late antiquity, competing for attention with the stone and metal cult images of the Roman period. In second-century AD Greece, Pausanias could still find very old statues in Greek temples, and many of the cult statues captured or adopted in Rome's earliest days were still on display in temples by the imperial period.[5] During the late third to seventh centuries, the biographies of all of these different images and holy objects came to an abrupt end.

Two explanations are usually advanced for the late antique destruction of cult images in the Roman West, both of which attempt to connect archaeological evidence to major historical developments – incursions of hostile Germanic barbarians starting in the third century, and the rise of Christianity to the status of state religion in the fourth. I will emphasize and discuss here a third possibility, namely that pagans themselves intentionally destroyed and deposited cult images in what I term 'rituals of closure.' This chapter reviews the evidence for these three agents of cult image destruction, Germans, Christians, and pagans as they are attested in both historical and archaeological sources. It should be emphasized at the outset that culpability of one group does not rule out that of the others. Though it is easy and tempting to simplify cult image destruction to a single cause, the end-of-life phase of Roman temples and cult images, much like their birth, was really a long and complicated process in which multiple parties were involved.[6]

DESTRUCTION OF CULT IMAGES BY BARBARIANS

Germanic invaders of the third century, and to a lesser extent those of the fourth and fifth, have long been considered the prime suspects for cult image destruction in Rome's western provinces.[7] Starting in AD 233–235, German marauders entered Roman territory and inflicted massive damage on Roman settlements between the *limes* and the Rhine. Around 260, the Franks, Alammani, and Iuthungi penetrated even deeper into Roman territory in search of plunder. Further incursions would follow in the late 260s and early 270s. At the same time, Roman civil structures began to collapse, and from 260 to 273, Gaul and Germany broke away from Rome and formed an independent Gallic Empire led at first by the emperor Postumus. Both the Gallic and Central Empires were beset with internal conflicts that further added to the chaos.[8]

In the not so distant past, archaeologists attributed virtually all third-century destruction layers at Roman civilian and military sites in Gaul and Germany to the year 260. It was assumed that in this year all of the forts along the *limes* were deserted, and that territory between the Rhine and the *limes*, the *agri decumates*, was systematically and instantly abandoned. Late third-century coin hoards have even been used to map the routes of Germanic incursions into Roman territory.[9] Today, however, we know that the history of the Gaul and Germany in this troubled period is much less straightforward.

The Raetian *limes* were likely abandoned as early as 254, while the forts of the Upper German *limes* were given up in pieces over several years starting around 260. The civilian population of the *agri decumates* dwindled after 233 and 260, but the territory was not entirely abandoned. It was not until the reign of Aurelian, and the end of the Gallic Empire, that the *limes* were entirely abandoned as a defensive structure. The few remaining inhabitants of the *agri decumates* may have been re-settled in Gaul. Thus the exact dating of destruction levels and the abandonment of civilian sites can seldom be attributed to a single year or event. Nor can all destruction of Roman cities and military outposts in this period be blamed on barbarian invaders. Some sites, such as the Roman fort at Niederbieber, were probably destroyed by Roman civil war.[10] The numerous coin hoards buried in the late third century, on the other hand, are as much the result of the continuous debasement of Roman coins as a fear of Germanic invaders or civil strife.[11]

Though it cannot always be dated exactly, it is certainly true that much of the destruction found in the archaeological record was due to German incursions. Some of the most spectacular archaeological evidence for Germanic raids comes not in the form of a destruction layer, but in the shape of two hoards of metalwork found in the bed of the old Rhine River at Neupotz and Hagenbach. Both hoards are composed of large quantities of metal objects that were lost in the river by Germans crossing the Rhine on their way home after successful raids in Roman territory. In both cases, the lost loot included votive offerings plundered from Roman temples and objects that had originated from as far away as Gallia Aquitania. The Neupotz hoard included cut-up pieces of silver vessels, in addition to numerous bronze vessels, several with votive inscriptions, which had been packed into large cauldrons. The entire assemblage was likely transported on a cart that sank with it into the Rhine.[12]

A rare textual reference to the sack of temples by Germans in the third century can be found in the *Historia Francorum* of Gregory of Tours. Though written in the 590s, the passage describes events in the reign of Valerian and Gallienus in the 250s:

> *Horum tempus et Chrocus ille Alamannorum rex, commoto exercito, Gallias pervagavit. Hic autem rex Chrocus multae adrogantiae fertur fuisse. Qui cum nonnulla inique gessisset, per consilium, ut aiunt, matris iniquae, collectam, ut dixemus, Alamannorum gentem, universas Gallias pervagatur cunctasque aedes, quae antiquitus fabraecatae fuerant, a fundamentis subvertit. Veniens vero Arvernus, delubrum illud, quod Gallica lingua Vasso Galate vocant, incendit, diruit atque subvertit. Miro enim opera factum fuit atque firmatum. Cuius paries duplex erat, ab intus enim de minuto lapide, a foris vero quadris sculptis fabricatum fuit.*
>
> In their time (i.e. Valerian and Gallienus) Chroc, king of the Alammani, levied his army and overran Gaul. This Chroc is said to have been a man of the utmost arrogance. Having done various wicked deeds, at the

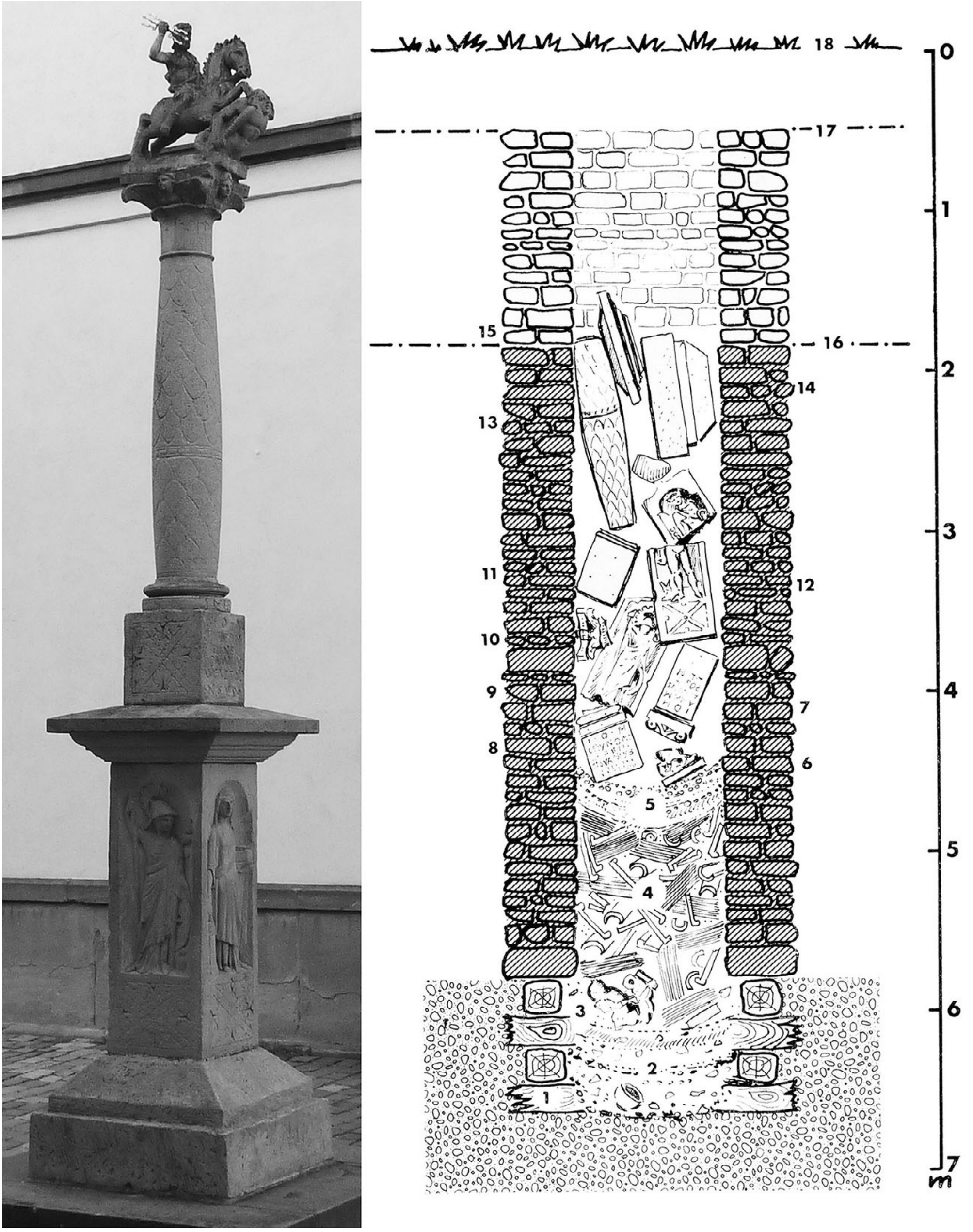
> instigation, it is said, of a wicked mother, he mustered, as I have said, the Alamannic people and overran all Gaul, overthrowing from the foundations every building erected in ancient times. Reaching Clermont-Ferrand (Arvernus), he burned, tore down and wholly overthrew the shrine which is called Vasso Galate in the Gallic language, a structure wondrously wrought with a double wall, fashioned within of small stones and without of great stones hewn square.[13]

The temple mentioned by Gregory is usually identified as that of Mercury Arvernus on the Puy du Dôme, presumably the same site where Zenodorus had constructed his colossal statue 200 years earlier (see Chapter 3). The Celtic name, 'Vasso Galate,' appears in a dedication to '*Mercurio Vassocaleti*' from Bitburg, near Trier. It has been suggested that Chroc's invasion was perhaps conflated by Gregory with a fifth-century Germanic invasion that had destroyed Mainz and Metz, but the issue is further confused by the existence of a Chrocus who fought for the emperor Constantius Chlorus in 306.[14] At the least, we should probably believe Gregory's statement that the temple was destroyed by Germans in the later third century. He should have been intimately familiar with the history of Clermont-Ferrand, whence his family came and where he was born. He was probably passing on a relatively first-hand memory of the destruction of the temple by Germanic invaders, even if the date of the event is incorrect.

Not surprisingly, modern scholars usually attribute the destruction of any cult images that occurred in the later third century to Germanic invaders. Most recently, Peter Noelke has pointed to the Germans as the main authors of cult image destruction, basing his conclusions on a detailed study of the findspots of Jupiter columns in Gaul and Germany.[15] At least 51 of these monuments were found in wells and pits where they had been deposited after being pulled down. The faces of the figures on the *Viergöttersteine*, the rectangular bases of the columns, had often been smashed prior to deposition, as had the varied representations of Jupiter that stood on top of them.[16]

Noelke emphasized the fact that most of the Jupiter columns seem to have been pulled down in the later third century, when the barbarian invasions occurred, and were located in the *agri decumates*, the first and worst afflicted part of Gaul and Germany. This dating was determined by pottery and coins found in the wells containing Jupiter columns, as well as the destruction dates of the sites where they were found. Noelke saw the presence of burned building rubble in many wells with columns, and the occasional appearance of human and animal bones, as further evidence that the columns were felled in the course of violent destructions of civilian settlements.[17]

The Jupiter column recovered in 1973 from a Roman well in the middle of in Ladenburg (*Lopodunum*) is a good example of a Jupiter column that was



6.1 The Jupiter column from Ladenburg as found in excavation (right), and a reconstruction now in Ladenburg (left). Sandstone, H. 4.1 m. (Both images are reproduced with the kind permission of the Lobdengau Museum, Ladenburg. Photo by the author, the drawing is by B. Heukemes)

toppled in this period and was deposited in a well (**Fig. 6.1**). Ladenburg was entirely destroyed around 260, and remained more or less abandoned for about a century. In 369, a small fort (*burgus*) was built in the middle of the ruined town on the bank of the Neckar River, as part of a failed attempt at re-fortifying Rome's western frontier that was initiated under Valentinian. This *burgus* was then abandoned around 400.[18]

When reassembled, the 4.1 m high sandstone Jupiter column follows the usual design of these monuments (see Chapter 3). The rectangular base (*Viergötterstein*) depicts Juno, Minerva, Hercules, and Mercury, one on each of its four sides. Between the base and the shaft is a square intermediary block with the inscription: *In h(onorem) d(omus) d(ivinae) / I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / et Iunoni / Regin(a)e / Novanius / Augustus / in suo r(estituit)* – "In honour of the house of the gods, for Jupiter Optimus Maximus and Juno Regina, Novanius Augustus restored (this column) with his own funds." The text is secondary and was added only after another dedication had been filed away below it. Only the last line of the older inscription, the final formulaic line of the monument's previous dedication, is still legible: *[---] / V(otum) S(olvit) L(ibens) M(erito)* – ". . . fulfilled the vow freely and deservedly."[19] The well at Ladenburg also contained the altar that originally stood next to the column. Its inscription reads: *I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / aram / Augustus / posuit / l(ibens) l(aetus) m(erito).* – "To Jupiter Optimus Maximus, Augustus placed this altar, freely, gladly and deservedly." Presumably the altar was also part of the restoration by Novanius Augustus.

The surface of the Ladenburg column itself is decorated with the usual scales, and terminates in a composite capital incorporating personifications of the four seasons. The capital is surmounted by a statue of Jupiter on horseback, riding over a giant and hurling a thunderbolt with his right hand. The head of both Jupiter and the giant over which he is riding were damaged prior to deposition, though whether this was intentional, or a result of the column's fall, is unclear. The faces and all the other parts of the figures on the *Viergötterstein* are intact.[20]

At the very bottom of the well, below a layer of building debris, a second damaged capital group of a riding Jupiter and the giant was recovered.[21] In the eyes of Berndmark Heukemes, the well's excavator, this second capital group once crowned the original Jupiter column that was later restored by Novanius Augustus. Of course it is possible this group came from another Jupiter column altogether, but Heukemes's theory is supported by the fact that this second group is perfectly in proportion to the other elements from the monument found in the top of the well.[22]

Thus the end-of-life story of the Ladenburg Jupiter column was two-fold. It was first pulled down and damaged at some point in the third century, perhaps by the invasions that failed to destroy the city in 233/5, or in the course of some smaller unrecorded incursion. At this point, the monument's crowning element ended up in the bottom of the well, perhaps with the rest of the column. When order was restored, the monument was repaired and re-erected at the expense of one Novanius Augustus, perhaps only after most of the column had been retrieved from the well. The repairs to the monument included the creation of a new capital group and the re-carving of its dedicatory inscription. Unfortunately, the restored column would be torn down once again not long after, perhaps in the course of the invasions of the 260s that finally destroyed the town. At some point after that, the pieces of the column again entered the well, which by then must have been half-filled and unused for some time.[23]

Though Christians may have been present in the *agri decumates* in the third century, they were certainly not a powerful enough group to have been able to conduct a major campaign of cult image destruction. This would seem to leave German barbarians as the most plausible culprits. This conclusion poses two important questions: Why did Germanic invaders bother to target religious monuments such as the Jupiter columns? And was the placing of the monuments in wells part of this same act of destruction?

As discussed in Chapter 3, the Jupiter columns were once interpreted as symbols of Rome's triumph over Germans and Celts. Thus their destruction has sometimes been attributed to either resentful Germans or to native populations who were liberated from Roman oppression following Germanic attacks.[24] Neither explanation is particularly convincing since other cult images were also attacked in this period, including depictions of purely native divinities.[25] More importantly, it is no longer widely believed that the Jupiter columns referred to Roman victories over barbarians, and even if they did, it is perhaps questionable whether the marauding Germans would have understood the symbolism of a Roman monument so easily. The idea of vengeance by angry and oppressed natives as late as the third century also flies in the face of most current models of Roman provincial society. By this point, the inhabitants of the *agri decumates* would have self-identified primarily as Romans rather than Celts or Germans.[26] Certainly they had been making and worshiping Roman style religious monuments, and at least Romano-Celtic images, for two or three centuries.

The motivation to destroy cult images like the Jupiter columns probably had more to do with their importance as cult objects to the communities that possessed them than with their original symbolism or iconography. Most Germanic raids of the third and fourth centuries served a specific purpose – to obtain booty. This could take the form of metal, as seen at Hagenbach and Neupotz, and many bronze or precious metal cult images were likely taken for this reason. The tiny fragments of statues of emperors found in the principia of the auxiliary fort at Aalen, or at the *limes* gate at Dalkingen, show that metal statues were a source of easy and dividable plunder.[27]

But the plunder would also have included animals and people. Slaves were used by both Romans and Germans and were a valuable commodity.[28] Amongst the many iron objects found in the Neupotz hoard were shackles for human prisoners, though we do not know if they were in use when they entered the river, or were simply part of the scrap metal collection.[29] The large monumental altar found in Augsburg in 1992 celebrates the victory of the Gallic emperor Postumus over the Iunthungi. Its lengthy inscription records the rescue some 1,000 Italian prisoners who were presumably being taken back to barbaricum as slaves.[30]

With the goals of Germanic marauders in mind, cult image destruction could have served two very practical purposes. It instilled fear into yet unfought enemies, and utterly demoralized prisoners into submission. In a way, Germanic cult image destruction was comparable to the murder, torture, and dismemberment attested at villa and vicus sites like Regensburg-Harting, where the skeletal remains of 13 individuals were found in two wells. The bones, especially the skulls, showed traces of violent blows.[31] Brutalized, and with their homes and even their holiest possessions destroyed, prisoners had nothing to hope for or flee back to. The very gods who were supposed to protect them had failed utterly and had themselves been smashed.

Thus it was the value of the Jupiter columns as communal cult property that led to their systematic destruction, not a special Germanic fury or love of vandalism. Such tactics were known and employed by the Romans as well. In the Republican period, Marcellus plundered statues and works of art from the temples of Syracuse in 212 BC, though not without incurring the condemnation of older Romans.[32] Germanicus destroyed the temple of the goddess Tanfana in his German campaign of AD 14, while Suetonius Paulinus, the governor of Britain in AD 60, destroyed the sacred wood of the druids on the Island of Mona.[33] Though it contained no idols to smash, Titus razed the Temple of the Jews in AD 70 in an obviously punitive act.[34]

The toppling and mutilation of cult images and Jupiter columns would not have taken a very long time, but their deposition in wells and pits would have been more work. In the case of wells, the point might have been to render them unusable to returning Romans, but the presence of the columns would hardly have been a major hindrance and could be easily remedied. Moreover, such acts of sabotage suggest a much grander unified strategy on the part of the Germans than was the case. The act of throwing the cult images in wells may also have been another form of degradation, or a means of rendering them powerless, comparable to the smashing of the statues and monuments, but if so, it seems an excessively laborious and unnecessary step. It is more likely that those who felled and defaced the Jupiter columns were not the same people as those who placed them in wells and pits.

In Noelke's view, the various pieces of Jupiter columns mostly entered wells in rebuilding phases, only some period of time after their initial destruction. He suggested that the column fragments were simply used to fill pits and other holes that had become a danger to men and animals. Noelke proposed that interest in the sort of public religion that the columns represented had reached an all-time low in the third century, thanks in part to the rise of the mystery religions, and their disposal in this manner was considered of little consequence since they had lost much of their religious value.[35] Support for the hypothesis of a long period separating the column's destruction and deposition can be found in the weathering patterns of Jupiter columns from Rommerskirchen-Evinghoven and Heddernheim, which show that these monuments had been lying in pieces on the ground with only one side exposed to the elements for some considerable amount of time prior to being thrown in wells.[36]

But even if public religion was being pushed aside by mystery religions in the third century AD, I find it unlikely that the Jupiter columns had become totally desacralized by this point, especially given the longevity of images from the Iron Age discussed earlier, and the restoration inscription of the Ladenburg column. If the ruined monuments had become mere building waste that cluttered up fields and villages, why were they not re-used as building material? The *agri decumates* contain quarries, but good stone was hardly abundant or easily available at sites like Ladenburg, and was certainly not cheap. Perhaps even hundreds of years after they were toppled, and even in their mutilated and collapsed state, these fragments of sculpture were perceived of as imbued with power (good or bad) that prohibited their re-use in a profane setting. Nonetheless, Noelke's point that destruction and deposition of monuments were two separate events conducted by different people and at different times is a very positive step toward a more sophisticated picture of cult image destruction.

In general, too much attention has been paid to the Germanic raids of the third century in discussions of cult image destruction. While the third century was clearly an important period of disruption in the *agri decumates*, the fourth and fifth centuries were hardly trouble-free for the Roman world west of the Rhine. While the Germanic raids of the third century seem to have been aimed at plunder, the long series of incursions that started in the middle of the fourth century, and continued until the collapse of the western Roman Empire, ended with Germans settled in or occupying Roman territory.[37] The Christian author Salvianus of Marseille, writing around 439, noted that the occupation and sack of western Roman cities by barbarians, including Mainz, Trier, and Cologne, at least meant that pagan festivals and activities were no longer performed in them.[38]

As with the third century, it is particularly hard to connect archaeological destruction with specific historical events of the fourth and fifth centuries in Gaul. Barbarian incursions were supplemented by internal Roman disputes in this later period too, with usurpers and emperors relying increasingly on Germanic mercenaries and allies to fight one another. As villas, settlements, and even cities were abandoned, so too were temples and their statuary. The abandonment of sites may be due in part to these external and internal pressures, but in the case of temples, it must also be associated with the rise of Christianity in the fourth century. By this point, Christians had become a real force to be reckoned with, and we may now look to them as the next plausible agent of cult image destruction.

CHRISTIAN DESTRUCTION OF IDOLS: THE TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

The issue of Christian responses to pagan sculpture in late antiquity in the Mediterranean world has recently received a fairly significant amount of consideration, with topics ranging from the mutilation of statues to their re-use as spolia being reconsidered and re-evaluated.[39] In the first chapter of this book, we saw how early Christian texts can be used to recreate pagan thought about the divine nature of idols.[40] These texts consisted first of Christian explanations for the new religion's lack of idols, and then direct denunciations of pagan idol worship. Some of them were dated as far back as the second century AD, and represented the philosophical position of what was then a minority religion. But when Christianity became the dominant religion of the Roman Empire, new forms of Christian writing emerged in which we find descriptions of these philosophical ideas about idols being put into practice. These new texts took the form of the biographies of saints (hagiographies), and the laws and official edicts that prohibited pagan practices. Since these texts are often used as absolute proof that Christians were responsible for the destruction of sculpture at many temple sites, it is worth reviewing them here.[41]

Christians were present in Gaul and the Rhineland as early as the second century AD, but it is highly unlikely that they were involved in any significant cult image destruction until the second half of the fourth century, when their faith became the dominant and state-supported religion.[42] The Synod of Elvira (near Granada), held sometime between AD 300 and 313, actually forbade counting amongst the martyrs those Christians killed for breaking idols, since such acts lacked any scriptural precedent.[43] Evidently the few Christians who dared to attack idols prior to the fourth century could expect to pay with their lives, and the early church authorities did not feel that the action was worth the risk. The few extant hagiographies that do describe saints destroying pagan temples and idols in the first to third centuries AD are either the very rare exceptions, are due to the misdating of saints, or are outright fantasies of much later hagiographers.[44]

The earliest hagiographies focused on Christian martyrdoms, and later on upon the lives of ascetic holy men and women. Some hagiographies, such as Sulpicius Severus' *Life of Martin*, were a response to the pagan traditions of biography in an era when educated Christians strove to demonstrate the intellectual and literary potential of the new religion. From the sixth century, and well into the medieval period, hagiographies also served to propagate the credentials of saints whose relics were located in different cities, monasteries, and churches.[45] Each hagiography catalogued the notable deeds and miracles of its subject which very often included encounters with idols, temples, and other pagan practices.

Pagan property was also attacked by late antique imperial legislation. Starting in the reign of Constantine, a series of laws were directed against temples and cult images. By 392, an edict of Theodosius demanded the closure of temples throughout the empire.[46] The prohibition of pagan practices also appears in the canons of episcopal councils from the middle of the fifth century AD right through to the reign of Charlemagne and beyond.[47] The extent to which the late fourth century laws were actually put into effect probably differed greatly in different areas and in different periods, as had been the case with edicts persecuting Christians in the period of the Tetrarchy.

In the case of sculpture, Lea Stirling has suggested that fourth century anti-pagan legislation mainly targeted images that received active sacrifice, while decorative or even religious statues of high artistic quality were preserved by the educated elite. This attitude may explain the collections of late antique mythological statuary found in fourth century Gallic villas. These small marble statues depicting mythological subjects were imported into the western provinces long after Christianity had come to dominate the Roman world.[48] The 70 herms found at the villa near Welschbillig, just north of Trier, date to around 375, and are a locally produced example of the same phenomenon of pagan sculpture surviving as art. The herms originally surrounded a garden and depict mythological figures, prominent Greeks and Romans, as well as personifications of barbarian races. While the herms followed the canons of classical portraiture, they were carved in a local limestone.[49] Such artworks were only at times permissible because they lacked any trace of agency or divinity.

In late antique Rome, pagan statues continued to adorn public places. Both Prudentius and Cassiodorus seem to recognize their value as *ornamenta* or works of art, and there is some epigraphic evidence to suggest that older statues were sometimes moved to new locations to emphasize their status as artworks rather than idols.[50] An imperial constitution of 415 dealing with statues in baths and other public places specified that only those images consecrated to sacrifices (*consecrata sacrificiis*) were to be removed.[51] Just as pagan perceptions of the divine nature of idols varied, so too did the Christian sense of urgency about their destruction, and as we shall see, this urgency also varied from place to place.

Though some Christians may have supported the use of cult images as art, and others may have been simply neutral on the matter, there is still plenty of believable testimony in western hagiographies to show that cult images were sometimes actively sought out for destruction. A few examples from the lives of saints of the fourth to early seventh centuries serve almost as a signed confession of Christian culpability in the destruction of cult images.

The most prominent of all western hagiographies are those of Martin of Tours (316–97), whose life was documented by his contemporary and acquaintance Sulpicius Severus (363–ca. 425). Sulpicius published a biography of the saint around 396, and a dialogue about his deeds sometime between 403 and 406. Both texts include several of Martin's encounters with temples and idols. Martin became bishop of Tours in 371 and died in 397. His activities against idols, temples, and other pagan practices all seem to have occurred after his appointment as bishop, and often while he was traveling outside of Tours.[52]

One notable episode can give us a sense of these stories. Martin had already destroyed a 'very ancient temple' (*templum antiquissimum*) in a village and was preparing to cut down a sacred pine tree standing beside it, when the priest of the temple together with a crowd of locals intervened. After failing to convince the crowd that worshiping a tree was foolish, Martin agreed to a proposal put forward by one of them. The pagans would themselves cut down their holy tree, but would be allowed to bind Martin to the spot where they thought it would fall. As the tree tumbled toward him, Martin managed to avoid being crushed to death by making the sign of the cross, which summoned a gust of wind that blew the tree away from the bishop. This miracle instantly converted many of the pagans to Christianity.[53] Evidently pagan sentiment seems to have been stronger for the natural idol than the temple, and presumably the statue it contained.

In another instance, Martin dealt with an imposing sculptural monument:

> *Columnam immensae molis, cui idolum superstabat, parabat evertere, sed nulla erat facultas, qua id daretur effectui: tum ad orationem suo more convertitur. Visam certum est parilem quodammodo columnam ruere de caelo, quae inpacta idolo totam illam inexpugnabilem molem solvit in pulverem.*
>
> Martin was prepared to throw down a pillar of immense size, on the top of which an idol stood, but there was no means by which effect could be given to this design. Well, according to his usual practice, he betakes himself to prayer. It is undoubted that then a column, to a certain degree like the other, rushed down from heaven, and falling upon the idol it crushed to powder the whole seemingly indestructible mass.[54]

This monument is usually identified as a Jupiter column, which is a convincing explanation since there was no other tradition of columns bearing statues in Gaul and Germany.[55] The only other possibility would be a tower-like monument such as the Pillar of the Sailors in Paris, or the recently discovered monument at Jouars-Ponchartrain, which was part of a temple complex and received coin offerings (see Chapter 4). Certainly such a monument would have been even harder to topple than a Jupiter column.

The problem of old temples and pagan structures that are so well-built as to require divine assistance in their destruction is a recurring theme in Latin hagiography. At Ambatiensis (Amboise, Indre-et-Loire), Martin dealt with an idol-house (*idolium*) that was so well constructed that the local Christian priest had been unable to tear it down, or possibly was unwilling or afraid to do so. Martin's prayers summoned a miraculous storm that toppled the building, collapsing its walls to their foundations.[56]

Martin's destruction of idols and temples sometimes met with violent resistance, and various attempts were made on his life. At a village called Leprosus, his efforts to demolish a richly furnished temple (*templum opulentissimum*) were frustrated by hostile crowds. After a period of prayer and fasting, Martin was sent two angelic bodyguards armed with spears and shields who protected him while he "demolished the temple to its foundations and reduced all the altars and statues to dust" (*dum profanam aedem usque ad fundamenta dirueret, aras omnes adque simulacra redegit in pulverem*).[57] In other instances pagans attempted to stab or decapitate him, with Martin escaping thanks only to divine intervention.[58]

Not all of Martin's contemporaries were as fortunate. In 397, in the Val di Non, in the middle of the Alps, the saints Alexander, Martirius, and Sisinius were beaten to death and burned on the remains of their own church after trying to prevent local pagans from conducting a *lustrum*. According to one source, the three were killed in sight of an idol of Saturn, thus paralleling their deaths with the sacrifices accorded to, and seen by, the pagan idols.[59]

The importance of Martin of Tours in early to late medieval thought can hardly be overestimated. Sulpicius Severus's *vita* and dialogues remained immensely popular reading well into the Middle Ages and were put into verse by Venantius Fortunatus in the sixth century and again by an anonymous imitator in the eleventh century. Martin's deeds were also recorded in the various writings of Gregory of Tours (538–94), one of Martin's successors and arguably our most important authority for early Merovingian Gaul. Gregory is best known for his *History of the Franks*, but he also wrote numerous hagiographies. These include the story of Simplicius, bishop of Autun, and a near contemporary of Martin, who encountered an idol called Berecynthia in the mid-fourth century.

> *Ferunt etiam in hac urbe simulachrum fuisse Berecinthiae, sicut sancti martyris Simphoriani passionis declarat historia. Hanc cum in carpento pro salvatione agrorum ac vinearum suarum misero gentilitatis more deferrent, adfuit supradictus Simplicius episcopus, haud procul aspiciens cantantes atque saltantes ante hoc simulachrum; gemitumque pro stultitia plebis ad Deum emittens, ait 'Inlumina, quaeso, Domine, oculos huius populi, ut cognoscat, quia simulachrum Berecinthiae nihil est.' Et facto signo crucis contra, protinus simulachrum in terram ruit, ac defixa solo animalia, quae plaustrum quo hoc vehebatur trahebant, moveri non poterant. Stupit vulgus innumerum, et deam laesam omnis caterva conclamat; immolantur victimae, animalia verberantur, sed moveri non possunt. Tunc quadrigenti de illa stulta multitudine viri coniuncti simul, aiunt ad invicem: 'Si virtus*

> *est ulla deitatis in statua, eregatur spontae, iubeatque boves, qui telluri sunt stabiliti, procedere. Certe si moveri nequit, manifestum est, nihil esse divinitatis in ea.' Tunc accedentes et immolantes unum de pecoribus, cum viderent deam suam nullatenus posse moveri, relicto gentilitatis errore, inquestitumque antestitem loci, conversi ad unitatem ecclesiae, cognoscentes veri Dei magnitudinem, sancto sunt baptismate consecrati.*
>
> Some say that there was a statue of Berecynthia in this city [of Autun], just as the history of the suffering of the martyr St. Symphorianus relates. In accordance with the pitiful custom of pagans the people brought this statue on a wagon for the preservation of their fields and vineyards. The aforementioned bishop Simplicius was present, and not far away he watched them singing and dancing before this statue. He groaned to God because of the silliness of the people and said: "Lord, I ask you, illuminate the eyes of these people so that they may realize that this statue of Berecynthia is nothing" He made the sign of the cross against [the statue]. Immediately it crashed to the ground, and the oxen that drew the wagon on which the statue was carried were fixed to the ground and could not be moved. The huge horde was stunned, and the entire crowd cried out that the goddess was wounded. Victims were sacrificed, and although the oxen were beaten, they could not be moved. Then four hundred men from that silly mass of people gathered together and said to one another: "If there is any power of a deity in the statue, let it be raised on its own and let it order the oxen who are stuck to the ground to advance. If it cannot be moved, it is of course obvious that there is no deity in it." Then they approached and sacrificed one of their cattle. When they saw that their goddess could not be moved at all, they abandoned the error of paganism, sought out the bishop of the region, and converted to the unity of the church. They acknowledged the greatness of the true God and were consecrated by holy baptism.[60]

Clearly, the text is comparable to Martin's encounter with a pagan funerary procession and the paralysis miracle described by Sulpicius Severus that was reproduced in the last chapter. We may also be very certain that Gregory was intimately familiar with the works of Sulpicius. In this case, however, the procession does indeed involve an idol, clearly endowed with agency by its worshipers, that is destroyed by the bishop. Gregory may have copied some of the conventions of depicting saintly miracles established by Sulpicius, and we will return to the question of the historical veracity of these hagiographies that this sort of copying raises shortly.

Maurilius, who was ordained a priest by Martin himself, became the bishop of Angers (Maine-et-Loire) around 387, and followed Martin's example in the destruction of temples and idols. His hagiography was written by Magnobodus of Angers around 620, though later *vitae* exist as well.[61] Upon finding an ancient temple at a place called Calonna, near Angers, Maurilius summoned fire from heaven to destroy the structure and built a church in its place.[62] Later, the saint was informed by the Holy Spirit of yet another temple filled with idols at a hill called Prisciacus near Calonna. When he reached the site, demons appeared in the air and addressed Maurilius, demanding to know why he persecuted them, and complaining that nowhere in the region was safe for them. Ignoring their complaints, Maurilius collected the temple's idols, burned them (*quidquid ibi fuerat congregatum ex diversis idolis, igne cremavit*), and built a monastery on the spot.[63] The presence of wooden cult images in Roman temple sites was discussed earlier (Chapter 3), so it is no literary fantasy that Maurilius encountered such readily combustible idols.

Finally, Maurilius learned of a cliff-face with a sacred wood located near the village of Commonicus at which crowds were accustomed to assemble to celebrate profane rites. After praying there with his fellow monks for an entire night, a terrible smell left the spot, convincing the locals that the demons they had worshiped were spurious. The monks and locals then joined forces in burning the sacred wood and in constructing a church to the Virgin Mary.[64] Like Martin, Maurilius dealt with temples where idol worship was still active, and where individuals needed to be converted to Christianity, though here we have the added element of churches being constructed in the place of temples.

Maximus, the bishop of Turin in the late fourth and early fifth century, addressed idolatry in four of his published sermons. He exhorted landowners to rid their fields, barns, and houses of idols, and to forbid their laborers from worshiping them. In one sermon, the bishop assumed the voice of one of his listeners: "Let us search, lest unknown to us there might be an idol in our possession."[65] In a sermon dedicated entirely to the subject of idolatry and pagan practices, Maximus advised his congregation that they should "remove all pollution of idols from your fields, and wipe away the entire gentile error from fields."[66] In a sermon delivered a week later, he congratulated them on their progress.[67] Note that Maximus requested his congregation to deal with idols located on their own property, but did not urge them to attack public buildings and temples, or the property of others. Similarly, the Synod of Elvira had required Christians to destroy the idols of their own servants and slaves.[68] Presumably preachers like Maximus inspired brief periods of highly localized Christian iconoclasm, but, unlike Martin, Maximus seems to have fallen short of encouraging wider conflict with pagans.

By the fifth century, the tone of the encounters with idols changes somewhat in hagiography. Saint Severus, a Christian priest living around 450, encountered little or no resistance in the destruction of a temple and its collection of 100 idols in Vienne (Isère). Severus then undertook the construction of a church to Saint Stephan on the same spot, and while digging the foundations for the new church, he found a silver vessel filled with coins below the temple.[69] Just as early Christian writers had mocked the powerlessness of idols, the inhabitants of Vienne decided that their idols were unworthy of worship since they were unable to protect their own property.[70] Thus we find in this story a demonstrable lack of the sort of agency that idols were supposed to possess, which in turn led to their undoing.

On a return journey from Koblenz (*Confluentes*), Gregory of Tours had himself met and interviewed a deacon named Vulfolaic at a small mountain-top monastery outside of *Eposium castrum* (Carignan, Ardennes). In his youth, presumably in the early to mid-sixth century, Vulfolaic had lived as a hermit at this location, at first imitating the famous holy man Symeon Stylites of Antioch by standing for long periods on top of a column. Eventually, he was persuaded that the climate in Gaul was not suited to this particular form of devotion. Perhaps Vulfolaic used a column from a ruined temple at the site, since he had already encountered an image of Diana in this same location "…which the incredulous people worshiped as a god" (*Repperi tamen hic Dianae simulacrum, quod populus hic incredulus quasi deum adorabat.*)[71] Vulfolaic broke smaller images at the site to pieces himself (*reliqua sigillorum confringeram*), but could only pull down the image of Diana with the help of a crowd using ropes and after praying for help. Shortly after the prostrate idol had been smashed to dust (*cum malleis ferreis in pulverem redegi*), Volfolaic's entire body burst into pustules, which could only be cured by the application of a holy oil from a church of Saint Martin. He attributed his suffering to demonic vengeance for destroying of the idols, demonstrating that these were dangerous objects.[72] In this later phase, it was demons, rather than crowds of angry pagans that threatened Christian holy men as they went about their work of destroying idols.

In Italy, Gregory the Great's 'Life of Benedict', written 540–605, includes an episode in which Benedict encounters a temple of Apollo at Monte Cassino, where the saint founded his monastery in 529:

> *Ubi vetustissimum fanum fuit, in quo ex antiquorum more gentilium a stulto rusticorum populo Apollo colebatur. Circumquaque etiam in cultu daemonum luci succreverant, in quibus adhuc eodem tempore infidelium insana multitudo sacrificiis sacrilegis insudabat.*
>
> *Illuc itaque vir Dei perveniens, contrivit idolum, subvertit aram, succendit lucos, atque in ipso templo Apollinis oraculum beati Martini, ubi vero ara ejusdem Apollinis fuit, oraculum sancti Joannis construxit, et commorantem circumquaque multitudinem praedicatione continua ad fidem vocabat.*
>
> There was a very old shrine there where Apollo was worshipped by the foolish country folk in accordance with ancient pagan practice. Around the shrine a grove of trees had grown up, also consecrated to the demons, and here, even at this time, large numbers of pagans in their madness used to expend great effort on their sacrilegious sacrifices.
>
> When the man of god arrived there he smashed the statue, overturned the altar and cut down the grove. In the temple of Apollo itself he built

> a shrine to St. Martin and where the altar of Apollo had stood he built a shrine to St. John, and by preaching ceaselessly he called on the faith all those living in the vicinity.[73]

Shortly afterward, a fearsome and fiery demon appeared to Benedict, cursing him and, as with Maurilius, asking why it was being persecuted by the saint. This episode has a sequel, to which we will return later, in which another demonic inhabitant of the temple put up a more robust resistance to Benedict's building. While the idols encountered by Vulfolaic and Benedict were being actively worshiped, neither saint seems to have encountered serious resistance from pagans of the sort that Martin had faced a hundred years earlier. By now, the temples were closed or, as at Monte Cassino, only sporadically visited. The demonic inhabitants of these sites presented more difficulty than the humans using them.

Other later encounters with idols can be found in the lives of Columbanus and Gallus, who traveled as missionaries from Ireland to Burgundian Gaul in the late sixth and early seventh centuries. Their story is recorded in a Life of Columbanus by Jonas of Bobbio (600–post 659), in two ninth century *vitae* of Gallus by Wettinus Augiensis (775–824), and Walafridus Strabo (808–49). The latter two authors drew on the work of Jonas as well as an earlier life of Gallus that has only partially survived. All three texts include a series of adventures involving idolatry and are frequently cited as evidence of Christian iconoclasm.[74] But the two saints worked in a social setting that was again very different from to that in which Martin had found himself, and different again from that of the fifth century.

Around 590, Columbanus founded a monastery in the ruins of a Roman fortress and thermal bath at Luxovium (Luxeuil, Haute Sâone). The Roman fort at Luxovium had probably been destroyed in the course of Attila's invasion of Gaul in 451. Jonas noted the following about the location:

> *ibi imaginum lapidearum densitas vicina saltus densabat, quas cultu miserabili ritoque profano vetusta paganorum tempora honorabant, quibusque execrabiles ceremonias litabant; solae ibi ferae ac bestiae, ursorum, bubalorum, luporum multitudo frequebant. Ibi residens vir egregius, monasterium construere coepit...*
>
> ...the heart of the neighboring forest there was full of stone images, which were honored in the older time of the pagans with profane reverence and with pitiful ritual, and for which they celebrated bitter ceremonies; now only visited by crowds of wild animals and beasts, bears, stags and wolves. Residing here, the itinerant man began to build a monastery...[75]

Though the pair would encounter idols actively being worshiped elsewhere, the idols in the woods near Luxovium seem to have been abandoned along with the fort, and Jonas provides no description of their destruction, let alone pagan resistance.[76] The idols are mentioned in the narrative to impress the reader that the saints lived amongst them without fear, in spite of the obvious danger the demons posed to the men.

In 610, after spending a period of time in Italy, where Columbanus founded another monastery at Bobbio, the pair traveled in the Rhineland and southern Germany, eventually seeking a suitable location for a monastery in the territory surrounding Lake Constance.[77] At Tuggen, both Wettinus and Walafridus describe an encounter with active idol worship:

> *Porro homines ibidem commanentes crudeles erant et impii, simulacra colentes, idola sacrificiis venerantes, observantes auguria et divinationes et multa quae contraria sunt cultui divino superstitiosa sectantes. . .*
>
> *. . . Beatus quoque Gallus sancti viri discipulus, zelo pietatis armatus, fana, in quibus daemoniis sacrificabant, igni succendit, et quaecumque invenit oblata, dimersit in lacum. Qua causa permoti ira et invidia, sanctos insectabantur et communi consilio Gallum perimere voluerunt, Columbanum vero flagellis caesum et contumeliis affectum de suis finibus proturbare.*
>
> Moreover, the men there were hairy and impious oafs, cherishing idols, and venerating idols with sacrifices, practicing augury and divinations, and pursuing many superstitious things which are contrary to divine veneration.
>
> . . .
>
> So blessed Gallus, the disciple of the holy man (Columbanus), armed with the zealousness of piety, burned with fire the temples in which they were sacrificing to demons, and whatever offerings he found he sank in the lake. For this reason, (the locals) were moved by rage and envy, and persecuted the holy men and agreed they wanted to kill Gallus, and to chase Columbanus, beaten with whips and struck with blows, from their territory.[78]

The description of the idol worshipers as hairy (*commanentes*) suggests that they were Germans rather than Romans, and the area around Lake Constance had been occupied by Alammani at this point for some time. The two saints fled the area, and were sheltered by a priest at Arbonna (Arbon), who was himself living in the ruins of a Roman fort. Providing the pair with a boat, he informed them of a place called Brigantium (modern Bregenz) where they would find suitable territory for a monastery.[79]

Having arrived at Bregenz, the two monks found a dilapidated chapel to Saint Aurelia, which Gallus restored and around which the holy men erected their cells. In a nearby temple, the saints also discovered three gilded bronze idols (*tres imagines aeres deauratas*) attached to the wall, as well as altars and offerings that had been left for them. Of the three idols, the locals said: "These are the old gods and ancient guardians of this place, by the support of which we and our families have endured up to the present."[80] When a crowd had assembled at this temple to conduct a pagan ritual, Gallus preached to them, tore the idols from the wall, and threw them into the lake along with other stone monuments. Some of the pagans were instantly converted to Christianity, while others were enraged and left. Columbanus then converted the temple into a church and moved the relics of Saint Aurelia into it. In spite of the anger generated amongst some of the locals at the destruction of their idols, the monastery at Bregenz nonetheless prospered.[81]

For most sixth and seventh century saints, the hagiographies describe pagan temples and idols as posing largely supernatural rather than worldly danger. Saint Romanus, bishop of Rotomagus (Rouen, Seine-Inférieure) in the first half of the seventh century, dealt fearlessly with a temple dedicated to Venus in his city, in spite of the fact that behind the temple and altar to the goddess there was a hellish opening (*hiatus tartareus*) from which flames and foul smells emerged, and from which the voices of demons could be heard.[82]

Stories of Christian encounters with idols and temples are not limited to the lives of the saints of Western Europe. Comparable episodes are actually more common in the hagiographies of Egypt, North Africa, and the Greek East. It is important to keep the place of such passages in perspective. It would be quite unfair to say that the lives of the monks, bishops, and other holy men were wholly occupied with the destruction of idols and temples, or with violent encounters with pagans. The hagiographies spend far more time describing how they healed the sick, cared for the poor, built churches and monasteries, and performed acts of asceticism and self-denial. The shared traits of eastern and western hagiographies raise an important question – were the accounts of idol destruction representative of local historical events or were they literary creations, essential components for any hagiography?

Given the way that hagiographies catalogue the miracles of saints, it is easy to imagine the episodes involving temple and cult image destruction as entirely imaginary set-pieces. Even the wording of the stories can seem highly formulaic, with repetitive and exaggerating phrases about a religion of idols being practiced by ignorant locals (*cultus idolorum cultivare*), or temples being reduced to their foundations (*reductum ad fundus*), and idols ground to dust (*ad pulvem redigere*). Even the demons who appeared and spoke to Benedict and Maurilius both demanded to know why they were being persecuted, parodying the question posed to Paul in a vision prior to his conversion to Christianity.[83] Before these texts may be used in combination with archaeological evidence, we must first consider whether the events they describe are pure literary fiction or based in historical reality.

On the face of it, there is good reason to believe, at least broadly, that the accounts of the hagiographers are based in some kind of historical fact. Sulpicius Severus' biography of Martin was written a mere generation after the saint's death, and Sulpicius claimed to have consulted Martin's contemporaries in gathering his source material. At least some who had witnessed the events described were likely to read his work, so outright inventions would not have been a particularly viable option. Sulpicius Severus, Gregory of Tours, and other hagiographers also went out of their way to lend veracity to their reports by including very specific information such as the location of events and even the names of witnesses and sources.

The reliability of accounts of temple destruction in hagiography of the eastern Roman Empire has recently been addressed by Helen Saradi. Saradi noted that the attitudes of the saints toward the temples as presented in the texts generally changed from the fourth to sixth centuries in a way that corresponded to contemporary events and social norms. Thus in the fourth century AD, Christian efforts against temples met with violent and forceful resistance from relatively strong pagan communities, and imperial support was sometimes required by local holy men to destroy or close temples. In the fifth century, pagan resistance was lessened but still present, with Christian holy men occupying abandoned temples and fighting with the demons residing inside them. Other temples seem to have been intentionally sealed by pagans, with their contents untouched. By the sixth century there is no trace of pagan resistance in the texts. The majority of temples seem to be empty and devoid of their precious contents, and are occasionally settled in by hermits who easily defeat the ghost-like demons that still linger. Saradi concluded that at the changes in the hagiographies accurately reflect broad changes in the relationship between Christians and pagans, even if the miraculous details of the stories were not true.[84]

In considering the archaeological evidence of Egypt and the Near East, Troels Kristensen has also concluded that beneath the rhetoric and topoi of hagiography lies a degree of historical truth.[85] Like Saradi, Kristensen found differences and patterns between hagiographic accounts of idol destruction in different places and regions. Thus the destruction of the Serapeum by bishop Theophilus at Alexandria in 392, and the destruction of Temple of Zeus Marnas and other idols of Gaza by Saint Porphyry in 402, both saw violent confrontations between Christians and pagan crowds, and both required imperial support. Yet these stories are different in tone from the highly localized destruction of idols by the monks of Upper Egypt, instigated by the indomitable Abbot Shenoute (348–465), one of Egypt's most important holy men.[86] As we shall see here, the differing forms of Christian attacks on idols presented by hagiographies are reflected in the equally varied nature of the archaeological evidence, suggesting a far more nuanced range of Christian attitudes toward cult images than a uniform and universal desire to destroy all pagan statues.

Even within this brief survey of western hagiography, we seem to have a pattern that is comparable to that of the Greek east described by Saradi, and a degree of variation in Christian responses comparable to that observed by

Kristensen. From the fourth to seventh centuries we have a declining level of resistance to temple and idol destruction, and an increasing tendency to represent cult images in ruined and abandoned temples with ghostly and demonic properties. The major difference between the east and west, however, is the presence of immigrant pagan Germans. In the case of Gallus and Columbanus at Tuggen, it is unclear whether the idols being destroyed belonged to an old Roman tradition or were recent Germanic imports. As in the east, the broad picture of idol destruction presented by the hagiographies of the west is probably reliable. So how does the archaeological evidence match up to the texts?

CHRISTIAN DESTRUCTION OF IDOLS: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Given the testimony of the ancient texts summarized above, it seems fairly safe to conclude that most of the smashed sculpture found at temple sites in the Roman West was indeed the work of zealous Christians, but we must also consider the extent to which Christian agency is corroborated by the physical evidence of archaeological record.

Kristensen's study of the Greek, Egyptian, and the Near Eastern evidence found a varied Christian response to pagan images in the material record. This included the total destruction of images by smashing, burning, and deposition in inaccessible places, but other responses as well. At Egyptian temple sites in Upper Egypt, such as the Temple of Seth at Abydos, or the Dendara temple complex, Christians went to great lengths to carefully deface both specific relief representations of deities, presumably those that were the subject of ritual and worship, parts of the anatomy of other images, and even specific hieroglyphs. Mutilations of figural images included decapitations, as well as attacks on the hands and feet, phalli, faces, especially the mouth, eyes, and ears of figural representations. This form of response seems to be addressed at specific attributes of the images, or relates to a specific form of punishment. In other instances, crosses were carved on top of images, or near the entrances to buildings and tombs. In Kristensen's view, the variation of the physical evidence for the destruction of religious images mirrored the varied and nuanced approaches found in the region's hagiographies.[87]

The act of carving crosses into statues, often on the forehead of busts, is undeniably a Christian response to an image, a modification that is usually interpreted as a late antique means of neutralizing or exorcizing the demons resident in them. Alternatively, these crosses may have represented a sort of baptism by which the statues were made acceptable to Christian society.[88] It is certainly a mistake to view the crosses as the result of a single period of Christian activity or as serving a uniform purpose. A recent study of the phenomenon in Corinth has shown that crosses were added to ancient sculptures between the fifth and fifteenth centuries, and that they were placed both on representations of divinities as well as on *togati* and other secular works.[89] At Athens, it has been proposed that the addition of crosses to the foreheads of portraits was reserved for representations of real people, rather than the gods, and represented a form of baptism of the artwork.[90] If so, this would mark a clear change in the direction of an artwork's biography. But unless such crosses were painted on statues, the phenomenon is simply not present in Gaul and Germany, and seems to be rare in the western Roman Empire as a whole.[91]

Similarly, the genitalia of nude divinities and breasts of goddesses and other female figures do not seem to have been as much the target of special attention in the western provinces of the Roman Empire as they were in the central Mediterranean world.[92] All three of the figures at the Schneidershecke watch-tower sanctuary had been decapitated (**Fig. 3.28**), while the breasts of the two nude female divinities were left untouched. Marble votive statues of nude boys from the Mars Lenus temple in Trier were decapitated and broken, but their genitalia were left alone. The breasts and genitalia of figures on Jupiter columns very rarely show signs of intentional mutilation, though heads and faces are routinely found chipped off. Female divinities of Gaul and Germany are generally depicted clothed, and it may be for this reason that the phenomenon is less conspicuous.

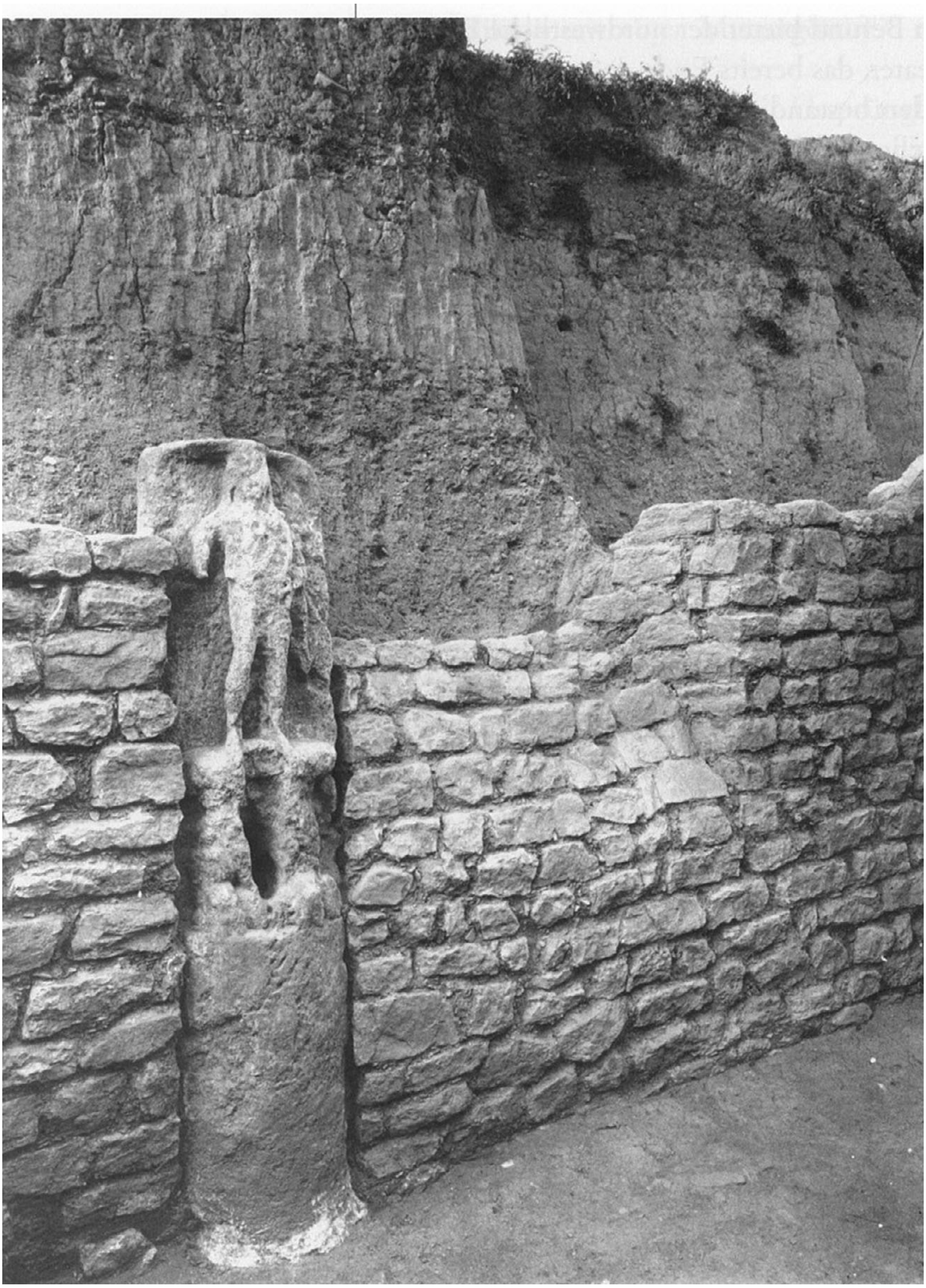
Perhaps we should consider other possible reasons for the erasure of specific body parts and attributes besides a reaction to possibly sexual imagery. A relief of Mercury from Vioménil (Vosges) included chop marks around the face and penis, but given the rarity of such attacks on genitalia, perhaps one may think in terms of the statue being emasculated, rather than offense caused by its nudity.[93] Western medieval art is not without its own fair share of nudity, so the issue of Christian reactions to it in pagan sculpture may be more complicated than we might think.[94] The selective mutilation of other parts of pagan artworks can also be found in the western provinces, and goes back as far as the erasure of torcs and weapons on Iron Age statues.[95] The horns or antlers of Cernunnos on the late second century AD Reims relief (**Fig. 3.13**) were carefully chipped away, removing the most prominent attribute of the divinity and thus its masculine potency.

The archaeological evidence does seem to confirm the picture presented in the western hagiographies that the Christian response to pagan sculpture was not uniform in this region either, and ranged from total annihilation to the sort of selective mutilation seen on the Reims relief. This diversity may be explained by different attitudes to sculpture in different periods, and to the influence of particular Christian holy men in different areas. Many temples and other public monuments seem to have simply fallen into disuse in late antiquity, or changed functions without incurring the wrath of Christian iconoclasts. The fate of the temple complex at Trier Altbachtal is a good example. This important temple site was once thought to have been the victim of sudden and total destruction by Christians in the 340s AD, during the episcopacy of the city's celebrated bishop Maximus.[96] But the evidence of the pottery and coins from the site itself show that some of the temples at Altbachtal were still in use in the early fifth century, though various changes and declines had occurred in the third and fourth centuries.[97]

By the early third century AD, the buildings in the western half of the complex at Trier Altbachtal had been re-arranged dramatically (**Fig. 4.2**). The site's cult theater (structure 36) had been dismantled and houses were built on top of it, one of which was converted into a Mithraeum later still in the third century. One of the site's more monumental Romano-Celtic temples (structure 43) was also converted into a house in the second half of the fourth century, with the addition of cellars and hypocausts to rooms off of its temenos wall. A large relief depicting Hercules was built into the wall of one of the cellars, acting as a strengthening post in a window well (**Fig. 6.2**). A hole drilled in the lower half of the relief suggests it had already been re-used as part of a fountain before it was re-used in the cellar wall.[98] Despite being an image of a pagan god, the block of stone seems to have been perfectly acceptable for re-use, as the image of Hercules would even have been visible in the cellar of the new structure. It can hardly have been deemed to be dangerous or demon infested, and was certainly not endowed with a sense of agency.

On the eastern side of the Altbachtal complex, a paved road was built in the late fourth century and ran right through the middle of the complex, necessitating the destruction of several temples (structures 15–17, 21–22, 31, and 43). Inscriptions, reliefs, and other fragments of sculpture from the temple complex were used to pave the road. This would seem to suggest that the temples were already abandoned, or had been intentionally targeted for destruction by Trier's Christianized inhabitants. But coin finds from other temples right next to the road show that this part of the complex was still in use at the time the road was built. Christians may have welcomed the destruction of some of the site's temples, and the degrading re-use of the monuments, which meant that travelers walked over images of pagan gods, but they were unable to put the entire complex out of commission. The decision to build the road has thus been interpreted as a largely pragmatic one, more to do with city planning than religiously motivated hatred.[99]

A similarly neutral reaction to pagan monuments at Trier can be found on the reverse of a late fifth or early sixth century funerary inscription of one Succaria, a Christian woman, found in the cemetery of the Church of Saint Maximinus in Trier. The Christian inscription was carved on the back of a stone plate that bore a second century dedication to the goddess Diana, but absolutely no attempt was made to erase the name of the goddess in the pagan inscription.[100] Evidently, it simply did not matter.



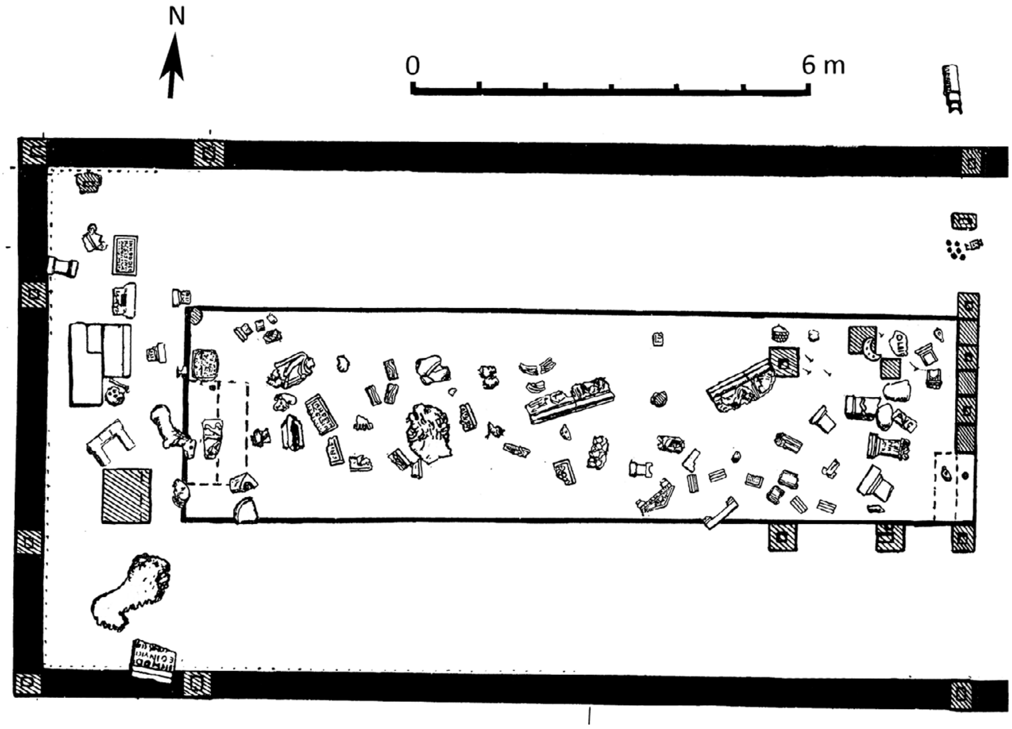
6.2 Altbachtal. Relief of Hercules built into wall of late Roman cellar. Jurassic limestone, H. 1.92 m. (Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier)

As we saw in the previous chapter, other cult images at Altbachtal were intentionally smashed. The bull idol of the Stierkapelle (**Figs. 4.8 and 4.9**) had been decapitated and left on display, as had the mother goddess statue in the gallery of a Romano-Celtic temple (**Fig. 4.20**). Only the bottom of the mother goddess idol in the Mars Lenus complex (**Fig. 4.12**) was left its base. These three mutilated statues seem to have remained on display their damaged state. It is possible the fragments were smashed then immediately buried *in situ* after the temples housing them were burned down, but if the idols remained visible for a longer period, then it was a significant aspect of the Christian response to them. Instances of mutilated and damaged pagan statues being left on display are known in the Roman east, and the practice may have been part of a continual process of humiliating an idol or cult image, reminding viewers of their true powerlessness and the defeat of the pagan past.[101]

Elsewhere, the violent and total destruction of cult images at the hands of Christians is all too clear, as Eberhard Sauer's study of Mithraic sculpture and sanctuaries in Gaul and Germany has demonstrated. Sauer observed that many of the best preserved examples of Mithraic sculpture come from the *agri decumates*, where, as we have already seen, Roman control waivered and vanished after about 260.[102] The end phases of these Mithraea in the *agri decumates* are quite different from the fate of those on the west side of the Rhine, like the Mithraea at Strasbourg Königshofen and Sarrebourg, where the reliefs and other sculptural ornaments were smashed to pieces between the end of the fourth and early fifth centuries AD.[103]

Quite unlike the casual toppling of Jupiter columns found in the *agri decumates*, the sort of extensive destruction seen in the breaking of sculpture at Königshofen (**Fig. 6.3**) and Sarrebourg would have taken a long time and required significant effort. At both sites, the fragments of the central bull slaying relief were found scattered in hundreds of pieces throughout the ruined temples, while secondary statues, such as representations of the Mithraic rock-birth, or the torch-bearers Cautes and Cautopates, were only partially damaged or even left alone.[104] The pattern is one in which selective and very thorough destruction are combined, where the main focus of cult worship, and the recipient of sacrifice, the tauroctony, was most violently attacked. It is tempting to connect this level of destruction with the repetitive hagiographic phrase '*redigere in pulverem*' – to reduce to dust.

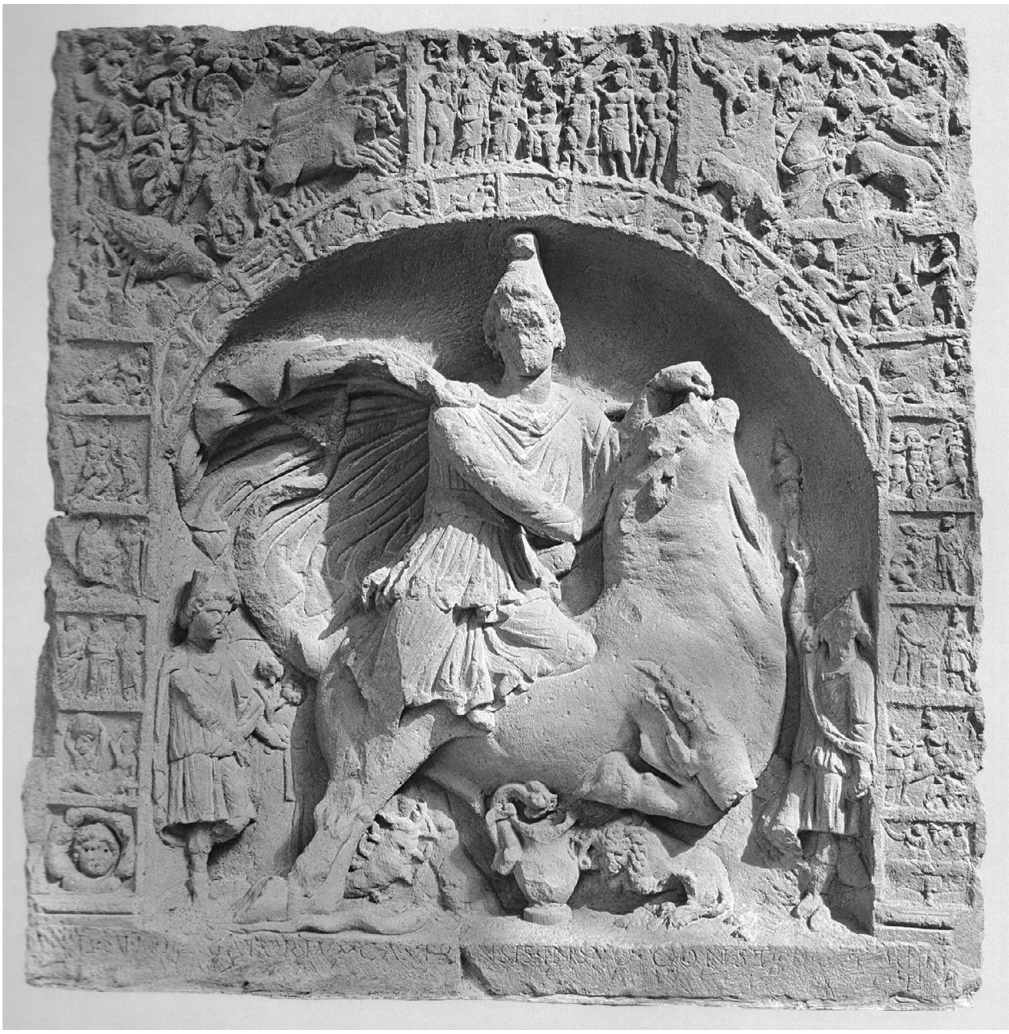
In Sauer's view, this sort of systematic destruction was indicative of Christian agency, and was not applied to the Mithraea of the *agri decumates* until much later. The German invaders and settlers who arrived in the decades after 260 initially ignored the Mithraea of this area, such that both they and other temples subsequently fell into disrepair and ruin as the region was depopulated. Thus we have completely intact reliefs preserved at the Frankfurt-Nida Mithraeum I (**Fig. 3.29**), Ladenburg, and Heidelberg-Neuenheim.[105] Other



6.3 Plan of the destruction of the cult images at Strasbourg Königshofen. The location of the sculptural fragments has been lifted from the excavation plan and superimposed on the reconstructed plan of the building. The finds are not quite to scale. (Based on Forrer 1915, plates 1 and 3)

perfectly preserved cult images from the *agri decumates* include a seated Epona from Köngen (Esslingen, **see Fig. 3.24**), and a genius statue from Bad Wimpfen.[106] The serious and methodical image destruction of old pagan temples did not begin in this region until it was Christianized in the sixth and seventh centuries.[107] By that point, Sauer argues, some cult images would have been protected and hidden by the collapsed roofs and walls of ruined temples. This fits well with the destruction outlined in the lives of Columbanus and Gallus, who encountered abandoned temples containing idols, and with the demands of preachers like Maximus of Turin, whose listeners owned land with such ruined temple sites.

Even in the case of the later mutilation of Mithraic reliefs in the *agri decumates*, the mutilation is sometimes selective, with only the central (and worshiped) figures being subject to violent treatment. For example, only the frontally positioned face of Mithras and Cautes were removed from the central scene of a massive tauroctony from Osterburken (Baden-Wurttemberg, **Fig. 6.4**). Like many tauroctonies, the Osterburken relief surrounds the central scene with a register of other scenes and images, including the deeds of Mithras, the figures of the zodiac, and other pagan figures. Of these smaller images, only the



6.4 The tauroctony from Osterburken of which only the faces of Mithras, Sol, and Cautes have been damaged. Yellow sandstone, H. 176 cm, W. 170, Th. 19 cm. (Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe, Inv. No. C 118, photo: Thomas Goldschmidt)

nimbate head of the sun god who rides his chariot in the upper left-hand corner of the relief has been damaged.[108] Perhaps at the time it was damaged the nimbus had already become established as a Christian symbol, and its use on a pagan monument was considered especially offensive.

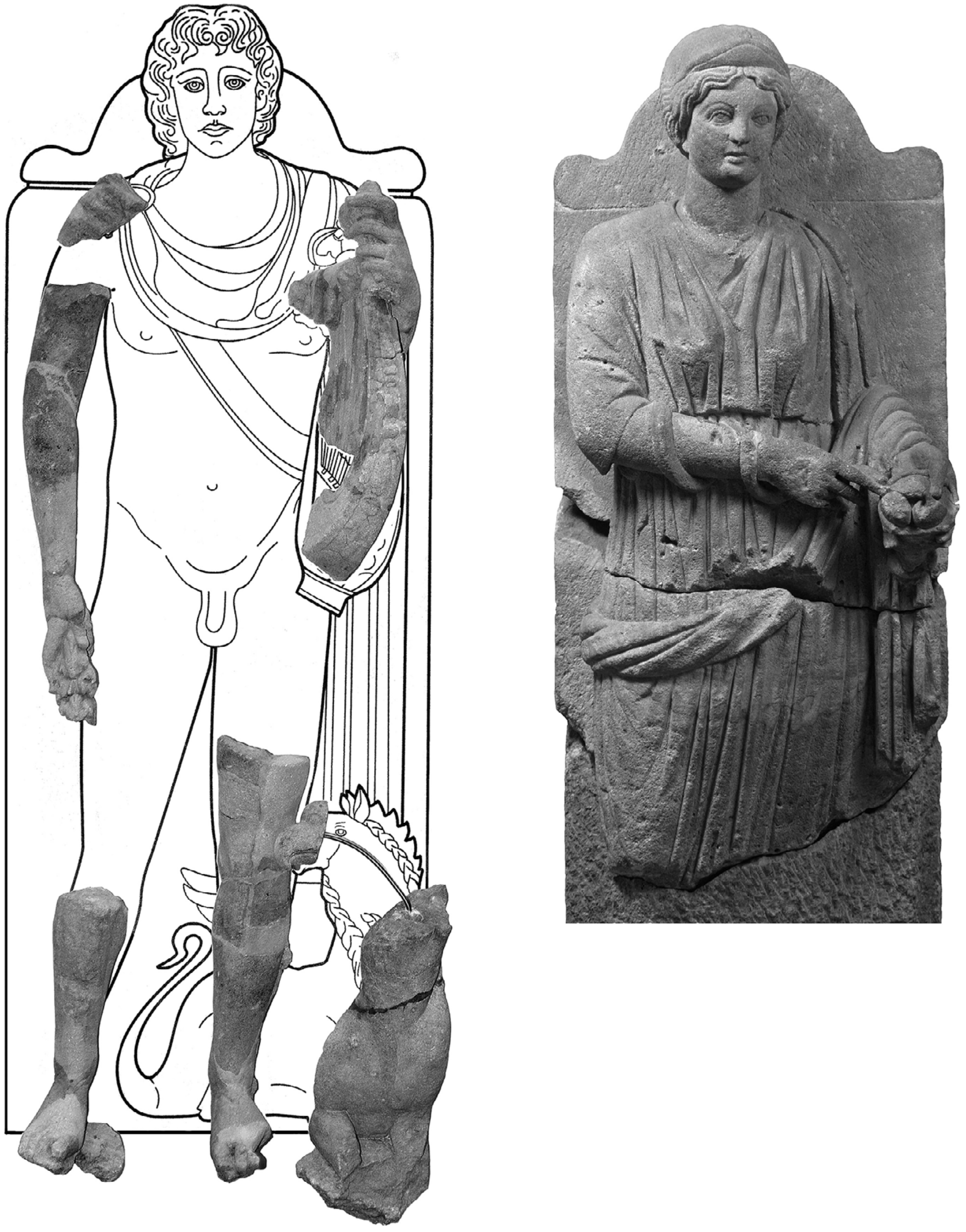
At other sites in the *agri decumates,* sculptural works in the round were decapitated, including several of the sculptures at the Dieburg Mithraeum, and the Mars Ultor, Salus, and Victoria from the remote watchtower sanctuary at Schneidershecke (**Fig. 3.28**).[109] Many cult statues were beheaded west of the Rhine as well, such as the Cernunnos from a well in Verteuil (**Fig. 3.14**).[110]

Neither the selective mutilation of the reliefs nor the decapitation of sculptures would have been as much effort as the reduction of reliefs to fist-sized chunks that is attested at Sarrebourg and Königshofen. Perhaps because these idols had already been abandoned they were considered less of a threat than those that were still actively worshiped. They no longer possessed the agency that Christians found to be the most threatening aspect of idols.

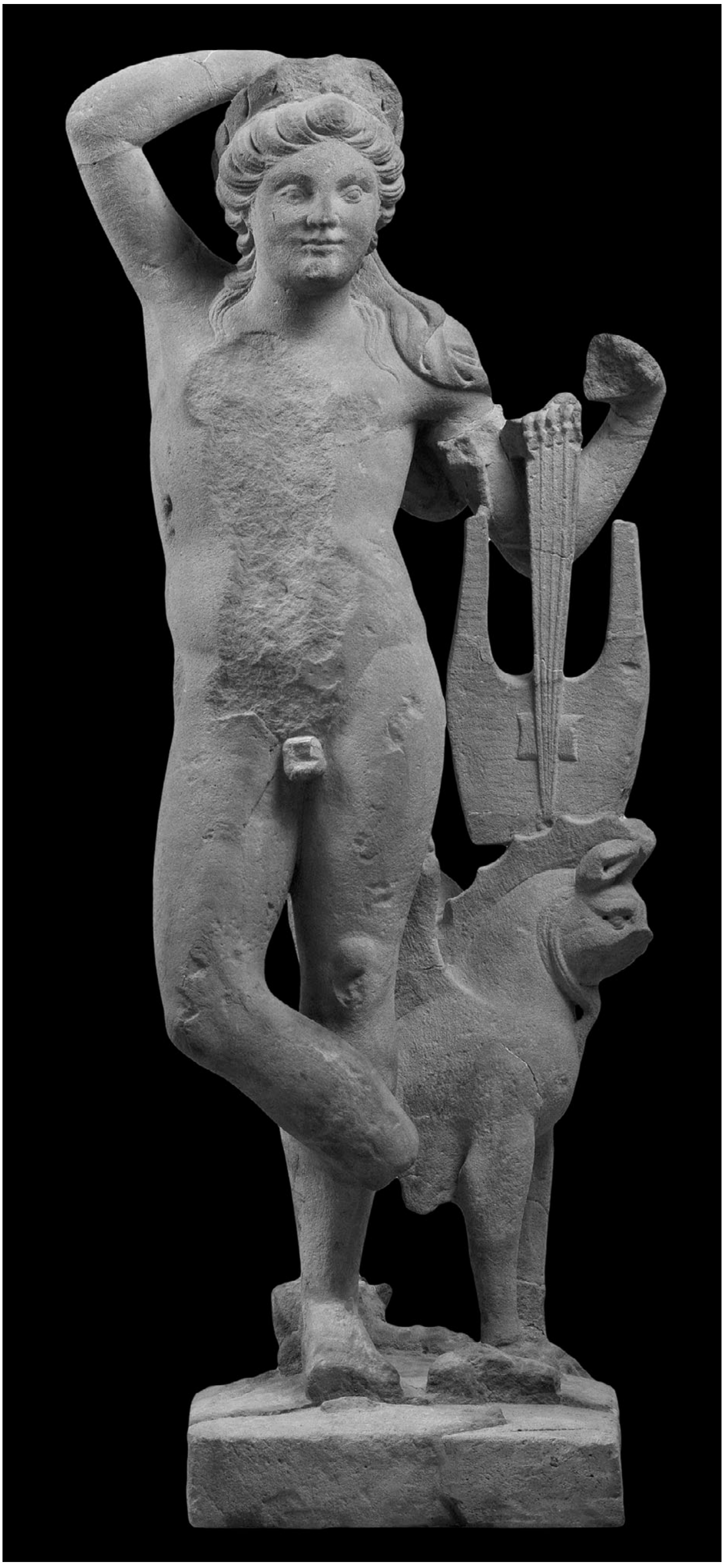
Different periods and trends in cult image destruction are attested at Romano-Celtic temple sites as well. At Thun-Allmendingen, the northern half of the site, where the profane buildings were located, was destroyed by fire in the third century and never rebuilt. But the temple buildings on the southern side of the site continued to receive coin offerings until the middle of the fourth century, and did not fall into ruin until the end of the fourth or early fifth. Presumably it was around this time that the site's sculpture was collected, systematically smashed, and some 200 selected fragments of it were buried in a pit in the middle of temple 2. Unless it was made of wood and had simply decomposed, the idol in temple 6 had already been removed by this point and the building was covered in debris or overgrown.[111] Similarly, the smallest cella at the Mars Lenus temple complex at Trier was stuffed with mutilated votive statues, bases, and altars from the temple area and was then burned down, but only after the cella's floor and the floor foundations had been removed at some point no earlier than the late fourth century.[112] At Vioménil, a rural temple site, the fragmentation of images does not seem to have occurred until long after the temples had been abandoned.[113]

Three statues found in the cella of the pilgrimage sanctuary site at Hochscheid represent another scenario of chronologically diverse and selective destruction. Located in a remote part of the Hünsruck, the site consisted of a bath building, a hostel, and a single Romano-Celtic temple. The temple was built on top of a natural springhead, the water of which flowed into a basin in the middle of the cella and from there into an artificial drain leading away from the temple building. Toward the end of the third century, the site was abandoned and the drain of the springhead was intentionally blocked, effectively flooding the temple. The statues in it were smashed only after a long period of time, by which point the temple was already half-ruined. These consisted of a large and a small Apollo Citharoedus and a depiction of Sirona in high relief (**Figs. 6.5 and 6.6**).

The large Apollo (**Fig. 6.5, left**) was broken into numerous small fragments of which only a small proportion were recovered. The Sirona (**Fig. 6.5, right**) was broken into larger pieces, and her severed head was placed in the basin of the spring. The smaller Apollo statue, however, was recovered relatively intact (**Fig. 6.6**). It may have been protected by rubble from the building, or perhaps was considered less important by those who smashed the other two statues. Erich Gose imagined the large Apollo and Sirona to have been the temple's



6.5 The larger Apollo Citharoedus and Sirona from Hochscheid in high relief. Left: Apollo, yellow sandstone, H. 136 cm, left leg, H. 67 cm, estimated originally height ca. 170 cm. Right: Sirona, yellow sandstone, H. 125 cm, estimated original height ca. 1.67 m. (Left: © GDKE/Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Photo: Th. Zühmer, with modifications by Craig Brasco. Right: © GDKE/Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Photo: Th. Zühmer)



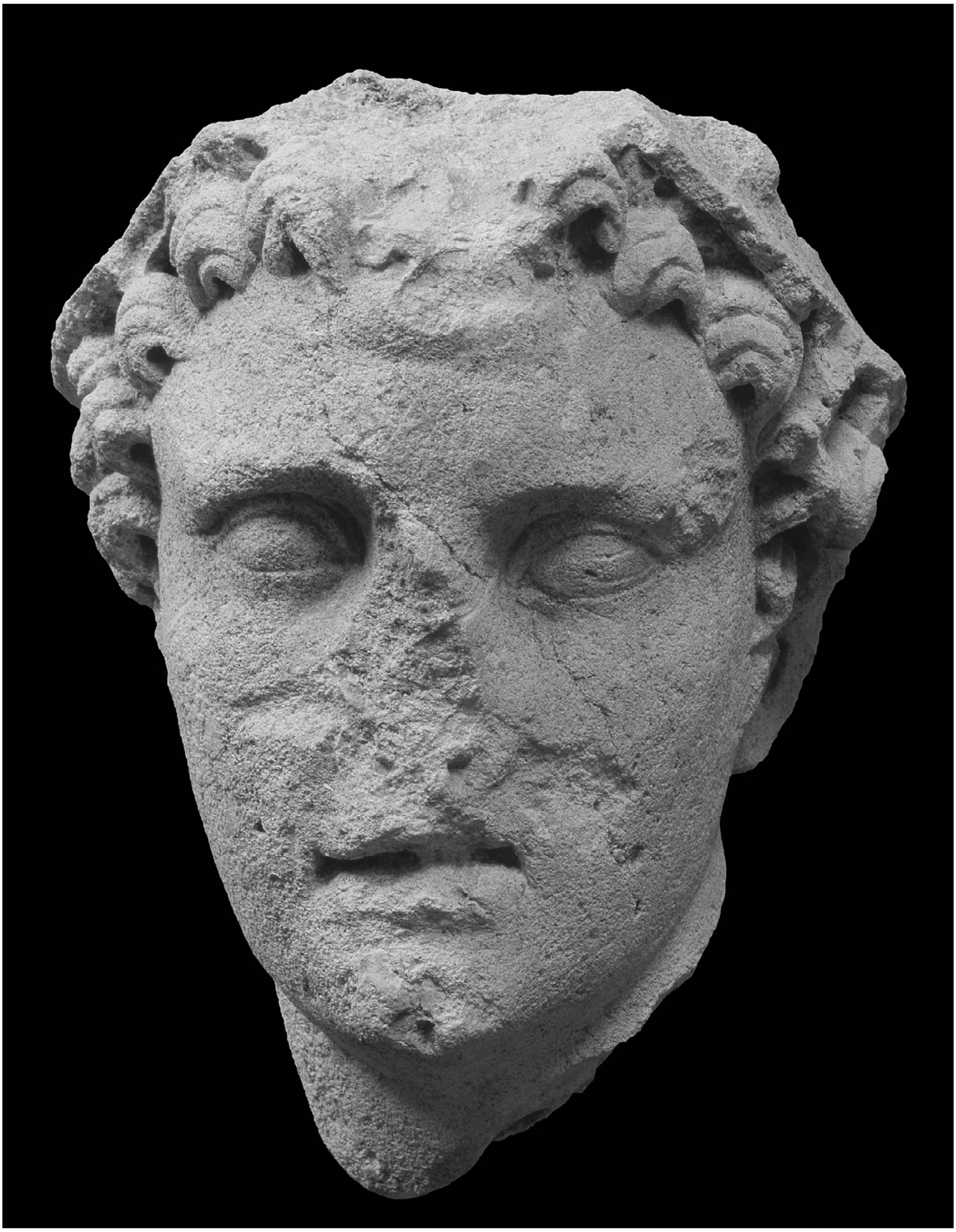
6.6 The smaller, relatively intact Apollo Citharoedus from Hochscheid. Yellow sandstone, H. 1.25 m with base. (© GDKE/Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Photo: Th. Zühmer) idols, and this could well explain the different intensity of the destructive treatments applied to them.[114]

Deposition of cult images in inaccessible places, such as wells, pits, or lakes may also be seen as a form of Christian response, and is one that is attested in the acts of saints like Columbanus and Gallus. Ralph Merrifield suggested that the large number of complete and fragmentary religious sculptures found in rivers and wells in Britain paralleled the places in which votive offerings were left by pagans, that is, liminal contexts perceived of as accessible to the gods. Merrifield argued that in the Christian period these liminal places became the conceptual equivalent of a Christian hell, and the placement of the statuary fragments in them was essentially an act of returning demons to whence they came.[115] This is obviously a very different position from that of Noelke who, as discussed above, saw the deposition of Jupiter columns and other cult images in wells as the simple disposal of inconvenient waste. But if the fragments of cult images were devoid of all meaning, why were they not re-used directly as building material? Christians may have seen cult images or their fragments as dangerous and treated them in the same way we might deal with toxic waste – by placing them in an unreachable location.

The special selection of particular parts of sculpture for burial in pits or wells may well be indicative of a Christian reaction to polluted and dangerous material. The collection of sculptural fragments from the pit in temple 2 at Thun-Allmendingen is dominated by faces, fingers, arms, and legs, with other body fragments being suspiciously absent.[116] At Vioménil, heads dominated an assemblage of mutilated sculptures found at the site, including three well preserved busts of Mercury.[117] The high proportion of certain body parts in these deposits is not the result of random selection.

A life-sized limestone bust from the temple complex at Tawern (**Fig. 6.7**) was found half-way down a 15 m deep well in the course of the excavation of the site in 1986. The bust has been dated to the late first or early second century AD on stylistic grounds, though it must have entered the well in the late fourth century at the earliest judging by the coins found in the well's filling. In the opinion of the excavator, the head represented the most characteristic part of the cult image, and was selected for deposition as part of a late antique Christian program of image destruction.[118] The broken nose and slash mark across the face confirm that the statue experienced a violent attack before it was thrown in the well.

A similar overrepresentation of head and hand fragments at the temple sites of Roman Britain has been observed by Ben Croxford, while the selective mutilation of reliefs and statuary is viewed as a key to understanding Christian responses to pagan sculpture by Kristensen.[119] Though the temples of the Roman West lack the extensive relief carvings that covered the walls of Egyptian temples, we nonetheless see selective mutilation of reliefs in the west



6.7 Bust of Mercury from Tawern, limestone, H. 34cm. (© GDKE/Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Photo: Th. Zühmer)

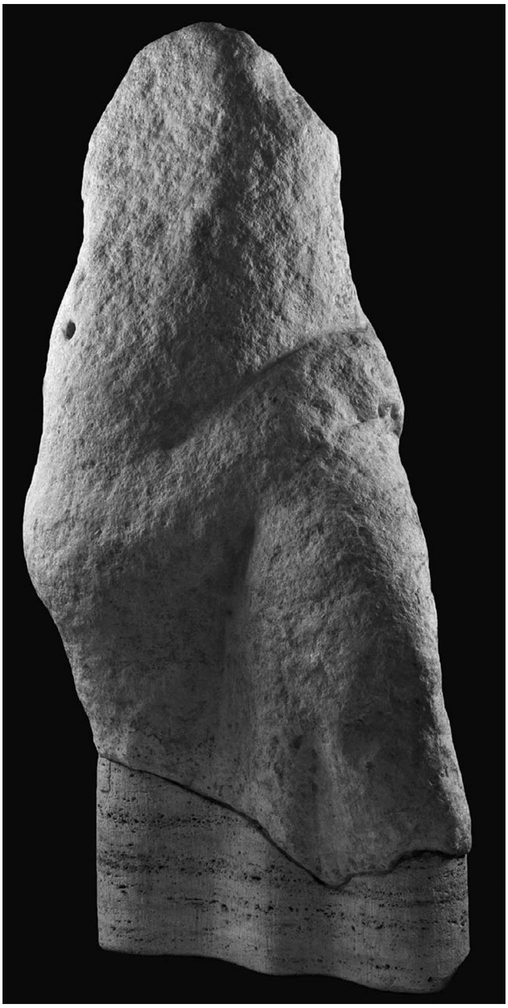
as well. Quite apart from the decapitation of statues and the select mutilation of tauroctonies discussed above, the erasure of faces of divinities on reliefs is also a prominent feature of cult image destruction, and can be observed on many of the *Viergöttersteine*.[120]

Peter Stewart has rightly compared cult image destruction and decapitation to the Roman tradition of *damnatio memoriae*, in which special attention was also paid to heads and faces of imperial statues and depictions of the emperor in state reliefs.[121] But unlike *damnatio memoriae*, the destruction of heads and faces on cult images prevented not just recognition of the hated leader, but human interaction with the pagan gods. Heads were considered important for fairly obvious reasons: this was the part of the body through which the gods experienced ritual activities directed toward them, through which they saw sacrifices, smelt burnt offerings, tasted libations, and heard prayers. The removal and deposition of the head prevented all of this, while the destruction of their hands and feet left the gods them unable to act or move. It quite effectively deprived them of exercising any agency that they may have still been deemed to possess.

Of course, such actions do not make sense as punishments if the statues and images cannot really feel them. Kristensen has suggested that Christian responses such as decapitation and selective mutilation of statues can be understood through the conceptualization of statues and reliefs as the flesh and blood bodies of the gods. He found that the beheading, dismemberment, burning, and mutilation of pagan images in Egypt mirrors both the punishments meted of criminals, often in public spectacles, and also the forms of corporal punishment of sinners that are described in Egyptian monastic texts, in which the very body parts that commit sins are punished.[122]

Finally, the re-use of pagan monuments in Christian buildings has been seen as another means of defusing and humiliating them. Apart from recycling pagan cult images in degrading contexts, as in the road slabs at Trier Altbachtal, they could also be put to use in prominent Christian setting. Mutilated votive monuments were used in the foundation and inner filling of walls at churches of Saint Ursula in Cologne, the Bonn Münster, and the church of Saint George in Alzey. Given their quadratic format, the *Viergöttersteine* of Jupiter columns must have been particularly useful to medieval builders. A second century *Viergötterstein*, with the heads of the divinities removed, was found built in the north wing of the medieval cathedral (Saint Maximinus) in Trier in 1976.[123] Their use in these foundations has been interpreted as a form of conquest and denigration of pagan monuments.[124] But one must be cautious about reading too much into this, as in each case the spolia elements were not placed in visible parts of the church, but rather were buried inside walls or in foundations.

A cautionary tale of over-interpreting the meaning of spolia in late antique and medieval churches can be found in the case of the cloister of Saint Michael on top of the Heiligenberg in Heidelberg. The medieval ruins contained various Roman sculptures, altars, and bases dedicated to Mercury, as well as fragments of Jupiter columns. It was once thought that these spolia elements had been intentionally dragged from the Roman settlement in Heidelberg-Neuenheim at the base of the hill, some 300 m below, as a form of intentional degradation, and as a sign of



6.8 The marble Venus from Saint Matthias in Trier. (© GDKE/Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Photo: Th. Zühmer)

Christian triumph over monuments of the pagan past. In 1983, however, excavation of the cloister revealed a Romano-Celtic temple complex immediately below it, and this was a far more likely source for the re-used stones. Moreover, between the construction of the earliest cloister in the ninth century and the end phase of the Roman temple complex in the third or fourth, a Frankish settlement was established on the same spot, probably occupying the abandoned Roman temple buildings.[125] At the time of the cloister's construction, the inscribed stones were probably deemed convenient building material rather than being selected as part of an intentional message about the victory of Christianity over paganism.

The best known instances of re-use of visible pagan images in Christian churches, for whatever purpose, are quite late. In Luxembourg, *Viergöttersteine* were built into the walls and foundations of several late medieval and early modern churches, and in two cases were used in the construction of the church's altar.[126] Was this a pragmatic use of a large square block, or an act of Christian triumphalism?

Starting in the late medieval or early modern period, a marble statue of Venus was displayed in the church of Saint Matthias in Trier, standing on a base with a derogatory inscription that recorded its history (**Fig. 6.8**). Visitors to the church would traditionally hurl stones at the defeated idol, a practice that was still current as late as 1811. The now badly worn lump of marble and its base are on display in the Landesemuseum in Trier.[127] The story of the idol is recorded in a rhyming verse inscription on the base:

> Wollt ihr wissen was ich bin.
> Ich bin gewessen ein Abgottin
> Da S. Eucharius zu Trier kam,
> Er mich zerbrach, mein Ehr abnam.
> Ich war geehret als ein Got.
> Jetz stehen ich hie(r) der Welt zu spot.

Im Jahr 50 nach Christi geburt sein die
3 H. Bischoffe von Rom zu Trier komen.
Euch(harius) Val(erius), Mat(ernus).

What am I? You want to know?
Once I was a false god, though
When Saint Eucharius to Trier came
He broke my body and good name.
Thus I, once honored as a god,
Now stand here for all to prod.

> In the year 50 after Christ's birth the three holy bishops of Rome came to Trier: Eucharius, Valerius and Maternus.[128]

At the very other end of the spectrum from the Treveran Venus, a relief depiction of Hercules on a *Viergötterstein* was re-invented as a representation of St. Anthony in a chapel in Kehlen, Luxembourg. While the faces of the divinities on the other three sides were hacked off, the bearded Hercules was left alone, and the name of the saint was even carved on the lower edge of the relief to help viewers identify the saint.[129] By this point, any sense of agency with which these cult images had been endowed was probably long gone – as idols they were long dead. The biographies of these objects as historical curiosities, through which the past was reinterpreted in a Christian light, however, were only just beginning.

Neither our archaeological nor the hagiographic evidence presents a uniform picture of cult image destruction in the Roman West. While it is clear that Christians were often to blame, it is hard to pin down who they were or when they were active. In different periods and places, Christian responses to cult images ranged from apathy to careful punishment of images to zealous and violent fury. But none of the destructive responses are understandable unless the idols possessed some kind of power, whether divine or infernal, and the patterns of selective destruction confirm that Christians considered some cult images to be far more dangerous than others.

RITUALS OF CLOSURE: THE CASE FOR PAGAN AGENCY

As agents of cult image destruction, both Christians and Germans represent negative external forces. Both destroyed cult images because they belonged to the 'other' rather than 'us.' A different scenario is also conceivable. The acts of destroying and depositing cult images may have been performed by the very same individuals and communities who had created, adored, and maintained them.

Large deposits of broken sculptures and low value votive offerings, such as bronze statuettes and terracottas, have long been recognized by classical archaeologists as intentional burials, and are often labelled with the term *favisae*.

The Latin word, frequently equated with the Greek *bóthros*, is defined in a passage in Aulus Gellius, who quotes Varro's definition of *favisae* as underground chambers and cisterns near the Capitoline temple in which older damaged statues and votive offerings were stored.[130] Evidently some objects were so sacred that they could not be allowed to re-enter mundane circulation even if they were too damaged to be displayed, or had begun to clutter up a sanctuary. Several important deposits of sculpture from the ancient Mediterranean have been described as *favisae*, of which the *Perserschutt* of the Athenian acropolis is undoubtedly the most famous.[131] As in Rome, the cult images of provincial temples would have been equally prone to accidental mishaps and fires. Could not some of the finds of sculpture in pits and wells in the Roman Empire represent *favisae*, or similar ritual deposits?

Clauss-Michael Hüssen has suggested that the dumping of Jupiter columns in wells around Heilbronn was actually meant to protect them from Germanic invaders or to pre-empt their destruction at the hands of barbarians.[132] Certainly the Ladenburg Jupiter column seems to have been recovered from a well in antiquity, though it is usually assumed to have been placed there by enemies rather than friends. On Hadrian's Wall, it has been proposed that the sacred spring known as Coventina's Well, just outside of Carrawburgh, was intentionally filled with the sculptural offerings from its sacred enclosure in order to hide them from destruction by Christians in the late fourth century AD.[133] We have no textual evidence for the hiding of statues from barbarians in the Roman West, but in fifth-century Egypt there is at least one recorded example of pagans protecting religious sculpture from Christian iconoclasts by hiding them in cisterns.[134] It may well be that the idols and cult images of many Roman temples were intentionally buried or hidden before they could be destroyed. Realizing that things could not continue as they were, pagans may have opted to end the active lives of their idols on their own terms.

Rachel Kousser has recently interpreted the phenomenon of Jupiter columns deposited in wells as a form of sacrifice. Kousser saw the animal bones found alongside the columns as the remains of animals sacrificed along with the column itself. Filled and polluted, the well and its water became non-functional and thus were also part of the same sacrificial ritual. Though original, not all of this proposal is convincing. For example, the Jupiter columns and animal bones in a well from a villa at Köln-Widdersdorf were certainly not sacrificial victims as Kousser proposed.[135] The presence of light traces of burning on otherwise uncooked bones, the completeness of the skeletons, and the lack of butcher's marks were indicative of a group of animals that had perished in a barn fire during the destruction of the villa. The bodies of the animals were then thrown into the well along with the column.[136] Nonetheless, Kousser's approach is a welcome deviation from the standard Christian and barbarian driven explanations.

In his study of sculptural fragments from temple sites in Roman Britain, Ben Croxford noted that many finds came from what might be termed 'structured deposits' – archaeological contexts suggestive of intentional ritual deposition rather than abandonment. By studying the fragments in great detail, Croxford noted that particular parts of statues were systematically selected for special treatment or re-use, while others were rejected.[137] Of particular interest to Croxford was the intentional burial of sculptural fragments below a third century AD floor of the Walbrook Mithraeum, which remained a functional pagan building long after the fragments were sealed beneath the floor. Croxford argued that the intentional fragmentation and burial of select parts of cult images in Roman Britain could be due to a change in a sculpture's function and meaning rather than ill-meant destruction by Christian iconoclasts.[138]

The basic idea of both Kousser and Croxford, to look to pagans as the intentional authors of cult image destruction and deposition, demands further consideration. In many other cultures, sacred objects undergo "rituals of termination" or "rituals of closure" in which they are intentionally destroyed or removed from circulation by the very same people who created and used them. The basic format of the ritual of closure can be found in modern anthropological studies. For example, Peter Stahl has studied the use of figurines by shamans in South America which house the spirits of other-worldly beings who the shamans encounter during hallucinogenic trances. At the conclusion of the shamanic ritual, the figurines are intentionally destroyed to prevent the spirits from remaining in this reality.[139] Such parallels suggest that it is not unreasonable to look for agents of destruction beyond the external Christians and barbarians, and forces us to include instances of cult image destruction that pre-date late antiquity.

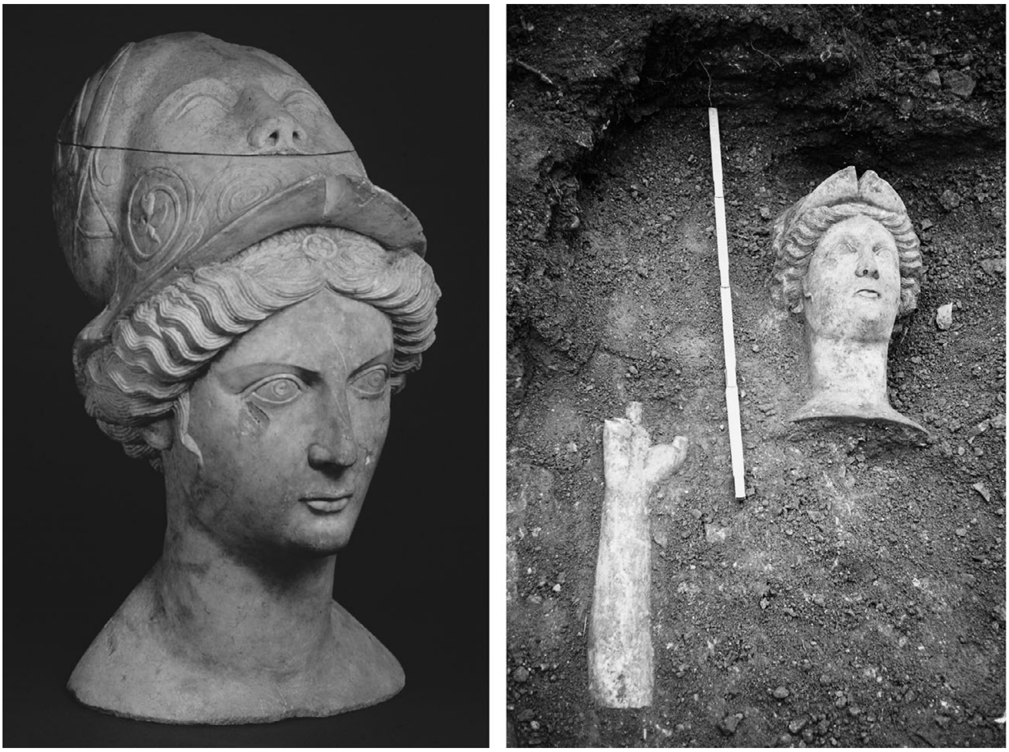
Another compelling ritual of closure is to be found in part of the Hindu festival of Nabakalevara, which occurs at intervals between 8 and 15 years in temples of the god Jagannath in Orissa, and sees the wooden idols of the gods Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra, and Sudarsana renewed. The procedure is best known from the Temple of Jagannath at Puri, and begins with a long search for special neem trees from which the new idols are fashioned. At the climax of the procedure, the life-force of the old idols, a substance which is located in a small box in a hollow cavity inside them, is removed and transferred into the new ones by a blindfolded priest. The nature of this life-force substance is unclear, but in some traditions it is said to consist of fragments of the earliest images of the god that were destroyed in the sixteenth century. This step represents a strategy by which agency and legitimacy are transferred from the old to the new idols. Finally, and of most interest here, the old and now empty idols are buried or deposited in wells within the grounds of the temple complex itself.[140]

Rituals of closure have been identified in varied phenomena in the archeological record of other past cultures as well. These include the regular burning and rebuilding of Neolithic long-houses in south-east Europe, the destruction of cult furniture, the sealing and burying of entire temple complexes in the ancient Near East, and the cyclical destruction of images, objects, and religious sites in the Mayan world.[141] In each case, ancient and modern, the destruction and deposition is both intentional and conducted by internal actors rather than external enemies or adherents of a different religion. There is both an interest in preventing dangerous material from being left in common circulation and also a sense of respectful disposal. If we assume the same hypothesis for the fragmentation, mutilation, and disposal of some cult images in Gaul and Germany, then a number of otherwise puzzling finds can be explained.

In a sequel to the episode from the Life of Benedict and the grove of Apollo at Monte Cassino discussed earlier, Gregory the Great gives an example of an early archaeological discovery of an apparently intentionally hidden idol. While Benedict's monks were constructing his monastery, they came across a large stone and decided to incorporate it into their building. In spite of their efforts, the stone could not be moved until a prayer from Benedict himself caused an invisible demon, who had been sitting on the stone, to depart. Benedict then commanded the monks to dig into the ground below the stone, and there, at a considerable depth, they uncovered a bronze idol which they then rather casually placed in the monastery's kitchen. As soon as the monks resumed their construction work, the kitchen appeared to burst into flames. This conflagration, which proved to be an illusion existing only in the minds of the monks, was again defeated instantly by Benedict's prayers.[142]

What is especially interesting about this story is the fact that the pagan sanctuary was actively in use prior to Benedict's arrival at Monte Cassino, and yet at some point even earlier the idol had been buried beneath the stone. It seems more probable that this burial was part of a pagan ritual of closure than that it had been buried by some previous Christian holy man. Several finds from Gaul and Germany could correspond to the sort of deposit that was uncovered by Benedict's monks in the sixth century AD.

In 1972, the head of a marble acrolithic statue was found beneath the floor of the capitolium at Avenches in 1972. The circumstances of the find make it a good candidate for an object that has entered the archaeological record as part of a ritual of closure. The statue was deposited intact and undamaged (**Fig. 6.9**), in a small rectangular walled compartment (3.9 × 2.1 m) that was built below the floor of the temple. The 56 cm high helmeted bust was accompanied by a marble arm, hands, feet, and an aegis, but the size of the container in which it was found suggests the disassembled wooden and cloth elements of the acrolith were originally included as well. When complete, the Avenches Minerva would have stood between 2.65 and 2.8 m high, and was surely one of the three central images worshiped in the temple, presumably alongside a Jupiter



6.9 Left: The bust from an acrolith of Minerva from *insula 23* at Avenches. Marble H. 56 cm. Right: The bust as discovered buried beneath the floor of a temple. (Left: Aventicum-Site et Musée romains d'Avenches, photo : René Bersier, Fribourg; Right: Aventicum-Site et Musée romains d'Avenches)

and a Juno. The features and style of the bust suggest an early Trajanic date, which corresponds to the date of the temple's construction.[143]

The date of the destruction or abandonment of the temple at Avenches is not known, as is the date of the floor beneath which the acrolith was buried. Avenches experienced a major decline in the third century, but continued to be occupied until at least the sixth. Perhaps the Minerva was replaced by a bronze or marble statue which necessitated a careful decommissioning and disposal of the older work. Alternatively, the acrolith may have been accidentally damaged by fire or otherwise contaminated, and was therefore replaced and buried under the floor. This latter alternative might explain the absence of similar containers for an acrolithic Jupiter and Juno in the other two partitions of the temple.

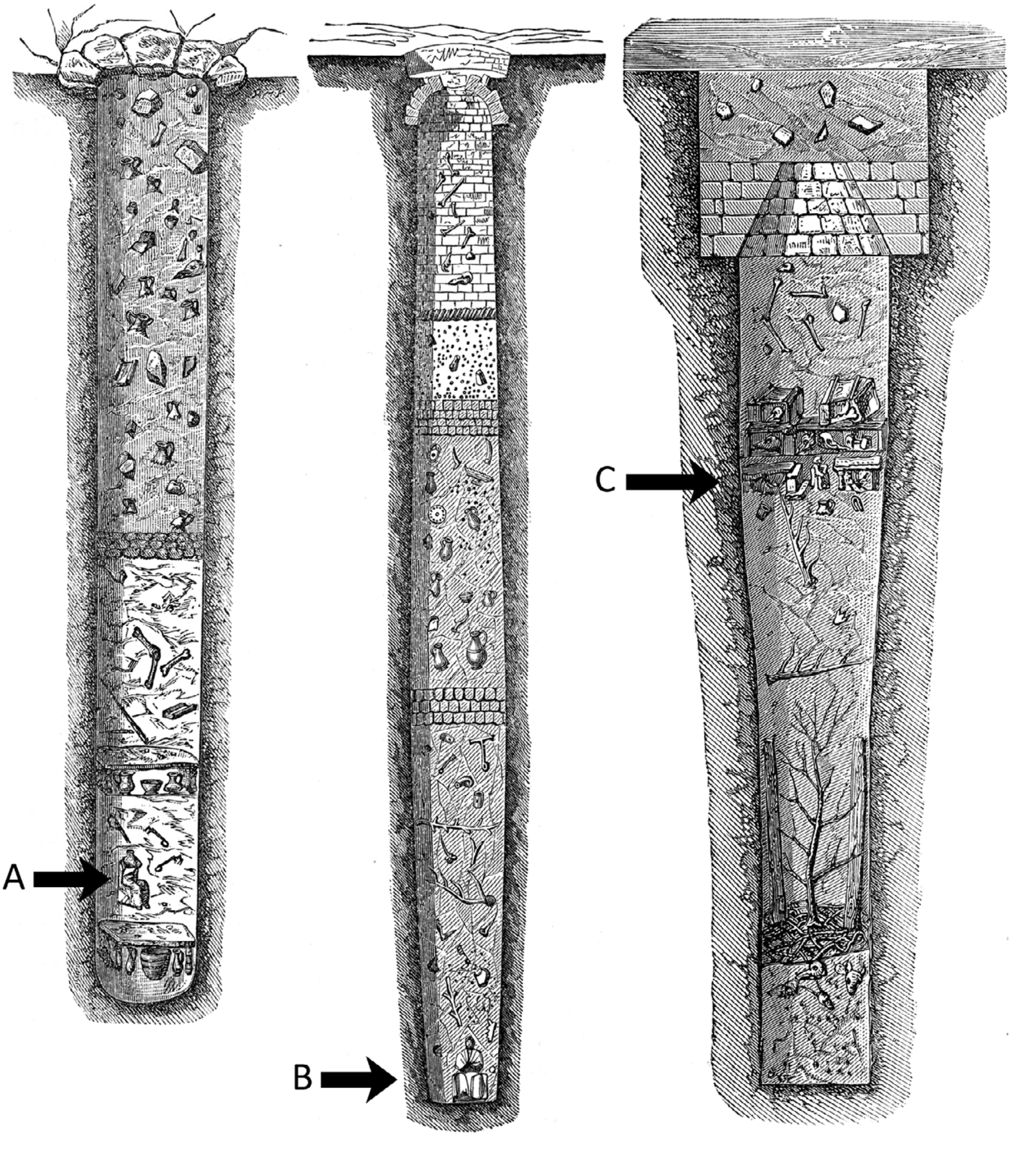
The sarcophagus-like container used to house the Minerva at Avenches is reminiscent of the find circumstances of two statues in Rome. The first is a bronze statue of Hercules from the late Antonine period, that was found in the courtyard of the Palazzo Pio in a pit lined with brick walls, and covered with tiles a stone plate inscribed with the formula *f(ulger) c(onditum) S(ummanium)* – "The lightning of Summanus (the Roman god of lightning) is buried here." The statue was presumably struck by lightning and then ritually buried.[144] The second is the bronze statue of a Syrian Adonis that was found covered in egg shells and seeds sealed in a walled container inside the Sanctuary of the Syrian Gods on the Janiculum. In this case, it has been proposed that the statue was regularly buried in this manner, and then brought back to life as part of the god's annual feast.[145] In both instances, pagans rather than Christians or barbarians buried the cult images.

Returning to Gaul and Germany, the case of a Jupiter column found in a well at Schierstein near Wiesbaden provides another convincing example of intentional ritual deposition of an idol. Excavated in 1889, the details of the deposit were recorded in great detail. The well, which had a diameter of 2.5 m and was lined with slate, was capped with a large square slab of red sandstone on top of which large quartz stones had been piled to form a pyramid. Below this cap, the well was filled with intermittent layers of stone packing and earth to a depth of more than 6 m. Two meters down, a small box-like niche of slate was found on the north-west side of the well's wall, and in it was a fragment of deer antler. At the very bottom of the well, the upside down base of the Jupiter column sat above the remaining disassembled pieces of the monument. The gaps between sculptural fragments had been carefully filled with stones and slate, sealing them firmly in place. At the very bottom of the well, which was covered by a wooden lining, were small fragments of terra sigillata, pieces of iron, deer bones and antlers, a small iron axe-head, a lead sling bullet, and the skull of a deer with one antler still attached. The figures on the *Viergötterstein* of the column, as well as those of the rider group that surmounted it, had been intentionally damaged prior to its deposition.[146]

The remarkable find at Schierstein can be interpreted in one of two ways. Either the column was damaged by enemies (Christians or Germans), and was later given a ritual burial, or it was intentionally put out of commission by its owners and then given this honorary send-off. If it was buried by Christians, then presumably the layers of careful stone packing that filled the well were meant to prevent the demons inhabiting the idol from escaping, while the stones marking the location of the deposit served as a kind of warning. If it was a pagan burial, then stones at the top were a sort of funerary monument, and the packed layers perhaps served to protect its contents. Some of the material at the bottom of the deposit may have been detritus from when it was used as a well, but the presence of antlers is strongly suggestive of pagan ritual. The niche in the well's wall recalls the offering niches found in later Roman inhumation burials in Cologne.[147]

The ritual filling of pits and disused wells, albeit rarely with sculpture, is a well-documented phenomenon in Gaul and Germany.[148] The structure of the deposit described at Schierstein may be compared to twenty-three pits excavated at Le Bernard (Vendée) between 1857 and 1880 by Ferdinand

Baudry, the parish priest of Le Bernard, and the archaeologist Leon Ballereau (**Fig. 6.10**). The pits at Le Bernard ranged in depth from 3.25 to 14 m, and were sometimes capped at the top with a pile of rubble or layers of stones. Most of the objects found in the pits, which included some 200 intact ceramic vessels, antlers, and the skulls of dogs, cattle, and other animals, were carefully arranged on the bottom and in layers of the filling. The objects were sometimes protected by niche-like arrangements of stones and tiles, comparable to the niche observed in the wall of the well at Schierstein.[149]

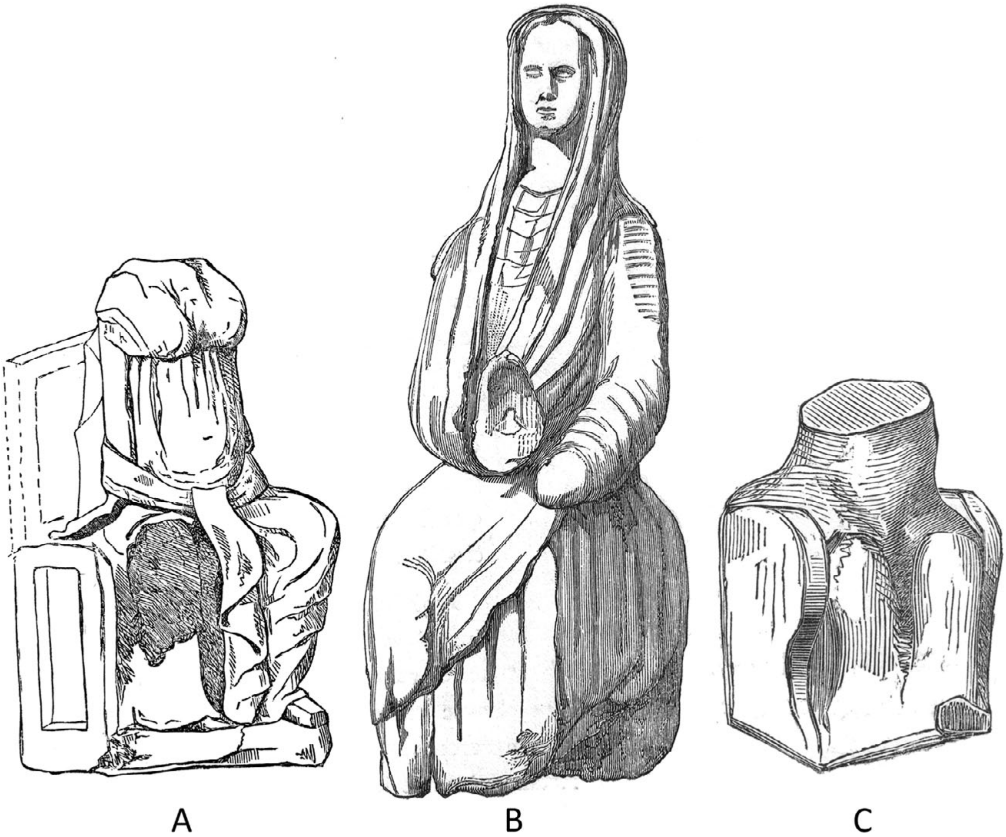


6.10 Pits 1, 20, and 21 from Le Bernard. The arrows indicate the location of sculptures. (Adapted from Baudry and Ballereau 1873, pp. 23, 172, and 182)

Baudry and Ballereau considered the pits to be funerary, since they identified human bones in twelve of them, but none of these bones were incinerated, or found in urns, and none were complete skeletons. The pits at Le Bernard, and those like them elsewhere, were almost certainly ritual deposits, with the choice of objects and their careful arrangement in the pits qualifying them as a structured deposit. Whether the filling was part of a ritual of closure for a dried-up well, or was a form of presenting offerings to chthonic deities, is a matter of debate. Though the excavation methods of the day left much to be desired, and no attempt was made to date the pits individually, the coin finds suggest they were filled from the middle of the second century to the third quarter the third century AD.[150]

The early dating of these pits makes any connection to Christians, and probably barbarian invasions as well, quite unlikely. Their careful filling seems to have been a ritual procedure, but only three of the pits contained sculptures. Toward the bottom of pit 1, a 17 cm high white stone statue of a draped goddess seated on a throne was found in an upright position between two protective compartments containing ceramic vessels (**Fig. 6.11A**). The statue was headless, armless and damaged on the lap (**Fig. 6.11A**).[151] The lower half of a similar goddess (**Fig. 6.11C**) carved in a white stone was found in a niche in pit 21, completely surrounded by other niches containing various ceramic vessels and bones (**Fig. 6.11C**).[152] The most spectacular sculpture, however, was found at the very bottom of the 9 m deep pit 20 (**Fig. 6.11B**). It consisted of a 50 cm high oak statue of a seated female wearing a cloak and holding an infant in her lap (**Fig. 6.11B**).[153] To these three statues, we may add a small headless terracotta figurine of Venus from pit 11 as the only other figural object from the pits at Le Bernard, though it may have been more of an offering than the three more monumental statues that had been so carefully deposited there.

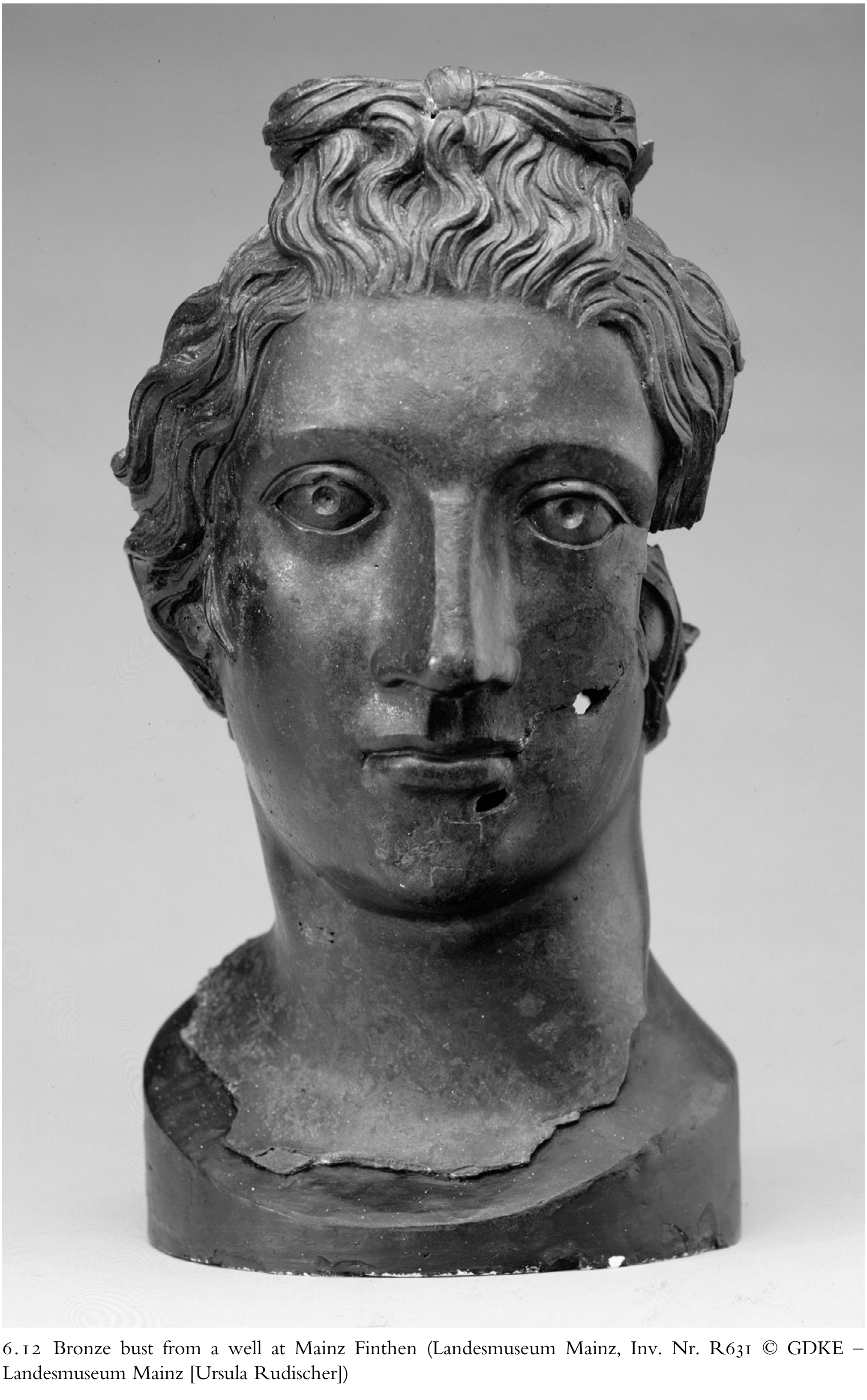
Any suspicion that the nineteenth century reports from Schierstein and Le Bernard, and the illustrations that accompany the latter, are fanciful or exaggerated, should be entirely dispelled by a very recent discovery at Saint-Valérien (Yonne). A wooden statue of Epona was found here in 2008 in a deposit remarkably similar to those excavated in the nineteenth century. The statue had been placed against the wall of a 5.82 m deep well at a depth of 4.5 m, surrounded by tiles and stones which seem to have once formed a niche or covering around it, just like those documented in pits excavated in the nineteenth century. Next to the statue was a copper alloy bucket, the bones of seven dogs, of what might be a wolf, and of a large bird of prey.[154] The dogs can obviously be connected to the iconography of Epona, and the entire deposit represents something more than the simple disposal of waste or pragmatic filling of a disused well. This is the sort of elaborate structured deposit that is suggestive of the intentional disposal of a holy or worshiped statue.



6.11 Sculptural finds from the pits at Le Bernard. A) White stone statue of a seated mother goddess from pit 1 (H. 17 cm); B) wooden statue from pit 20 (H. 50 cm); C) half of a seated goddess in stone from pit 21 (H. ca. 24 cm). (After Baudry and Ballereau 1873, 27, fig. 2, 180, fig. 1, and 184, fig. 1)

Apart from these figural works of art, several of pits at Le Bernard, including pit 21, contained entire trees that had been uprooted and buried standing up (**Fig. 6.11C**). Here we must ask which of the deposited objects was really the idol – the halved statue, the tree, or both? Sacred trees might succumb to disease, wind, and lightning strikes, and thus require such ritual burials relatively often, and in some of the pits at Le Bernard the trees seem to have been the main subjects of the deposit. It is perhaps significant that trees, with which the Jupiter columns have been connected, were treated in a similar manner in their disposal.

Special burial was accorded to individual heads of cult images at several sites, including a bronze bust found at Mainz Finthen in 1844 (**Fig. 6.12**). The life-sized bronze bust was found in a well, while other pits and wells nearby contained altars dedicated to Mercury. For this reason, and because of its slightly feminine face, the bust has been traditionally described as a "Rosmerta", the Celtic consort of Mercury, though other identifications are possible.[155]



6.12 Bronze bust from a well at Mainz Finthen (Landesmuseum Mainz, Inv. Nr. R631 © GDKE – Landesmuseum Mainz [Ursula Rudischer])

The metal value of the bust would have been considerable, and the value of the complete statue enormous. So if the image was destroyed by Christians, why was it simply not melted down? One possible explanation is that the statue was destroyed by pagans, with the bust, the most important part of the statue, being detached and ritually buried. Amongst the sculpture found in the areas of temples 1 to 5 at Thun-Allmendingen in 1824 was a 13.5 cm high bronze bust of a Diana venatrix, which must have been part of a 50–60 cm high statue, and was again a valuable piece of metal.[156] In both instances, the head has been selected specially as the most important body part for the burial.

The mutilation and fragmentation of cult images can also be attributed to pagan agency. The mutilation of faces, especially the eyes, could be intended to prevent the divinities from witnessing the desecration of their temples or the horror of barbarian invasions. Or was it a practical means of decommissioning them, of rendering them powerless after their useful lifespan had run out and the divine presence had been transferred to a new image? Both the damage inflicted to a cult image and its deposition signaled not only the end of its functional life, but also prevented it from receiving further petitions, prayers, and sacrifices from worshipers. In effect, both fragmentation and deposition may have been methods of showing that a given cult image was closed for business.

In both the Hellenistic Greek and central Roman worlds, statues of gods who had failed individuals or communities could be physically punished or thrown into bodies of water. Pausanias describes the whipping of the statue of an athlete on Thasos that was subsequently thrown into the sea, and in 129 BC, following the death of Scipio Africanus, the Romans cut up a statue of Apollo because it had been seen crying.[157] The emperor Tiberius had the cult statue of Isis thrown into the Tiber to punish the immoral behavior of her priests.[158] Why could such acts of ritual punishment not have occurred in the temples and sanctuaries of Rome's western provinces as well? A sandstone statue of Mercury and Rosmerta from Sulz am Neckar had the head of Rosmerta knocked off, and the lower part of Mercury's face damaged. Mercury's neck shows clear slash marks from the axe that was used to attack the sculpture.[159] Could such marks not be the result of idols being punished for failing a community or even as a sort of judicial execution?

Some idols were been removed from circulation prior to late antiquity, and here the possibility of a ritual of closure is especially attractive. The late Iron Age warrior from Saint Maur (**Fig. 2.16**) was found disassembled in a Roman period burial container composed of tiles. Perhaps, as has been proposed for the bronze horse and other late Iron Age statues from Neuvy-en-Sullias, some cult images were subject to rituals of closure simply because they had gone out of style.[160] Surrounded by newer and more impressive Roman votive monuments, old fashioned monuments of bronze sheets like the horse and warrior simply failed to generate necessary inspiration in worshipers. The gods, it was perhaps perceived, needed or had already moved into newer statues. The old redundant statues, reduced to the status of temple clutter, were respectfully buried.

Fragments of an old idol could also be used to retain continuity and give legitimacy to new ones. The excavation of the temple site at Calès-Mézin (Lot-et-Garonne) in the 1970s uncovered two limestone statues of Jupiter standing with a thunderbolt in his raised right hand. The first was largely intact, while only the head, a base with feet and eagle, and the arms of the second were present. Either damaged by natural causes, or somehow having fallen out of favor, both statues were dismantled and buried in a shallow pit outside of the temple in which they had been originally displayed. This event can be dated no later than the mid-second century AD since fragments of both statues were found in a floor and in the foundation of a statue base that was built in the temple at that time.[161] Once again, this date is too early to attribute the destruction to either Christian or barbarian agency.

Similarly, at Kottenheim (Rheinland-Pfalz), an over life-sized stone hand holding a bowl of fruit was found below the floor of a temple, and must have originated from a large cult image of a mother-goddess. The floor was added after the earliest form of the building, which was constructed in the Augustan period, had been destroyed in a fire.[162] This sort of *pars-pro-toto* use of sculptural fragments from older statues at Calès-Meniz and Kottenheim may have served to retain a sense of continuity between older and newer idols. Just like the transfer of a life-spirit between old and new Jagannath idols, or the sacred substances that are placed inside the hollow to'o idols of Polynesia.[163]

Like the images in the Jagannath temple at Puri, the presence of Roman gods could move from one statue to another, or vanish altogether, and this in turn could generate reasons for destroying empty statues. Lifeless idols were recognized by the philosopher Heraïskos, who lived in Alexandria in the late fifth century AD.

> ὁ μὲν δὴ Ἡραΐσκος αὐτοφυὴς ἐγένετο διαγνώμων τῶν τε ζώντων καὶ τῶν μὴ ζώντων ἱερῶν ἀγαλμάτων: εὐθὺς γὰρ ἐμβλέπων ἐτιτρώσκετο τὴν καρδίαν ὑπὸ τοῦ θειασμοῦ καὶ ἀνεπήδα τό τε σῶμα καὶ τὴν ψυχήν, ὥσπερ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ κατάσχετος. εἰ δὲ μὴ κινοῖτο τοιοῦτον, ἄψυχον ἦν ἐκεῖνο τὸ ἄγαλμα καὶ ἄμοιρον θείας ἐπιπνοίας.
>
> Heraiskos had a natural gift of discernment in regard to whether sacred images were alive or not. The moment he looked at one, if it was alive, he felt a stab of peculiar feeling go through his heart: his soul and body were both agitated, as if he were divinely possessed. If, on the other hand, he felt no such emotion, the image was a lifeless one destitute of any divine spirit.[164]

Such a talent might have been useful to the College of Pontiffs in 210 BC, who were charged with identifying consecrated and unconsecrated statues taken as plunder.[165] In the late antique case, however, one could imagine the question arising due to naturally occurring changes in the status of statues. The cessation of those regular rituals that maintained the bodies of the divinities, and other acts that reminded the public of their honored place in local society, had resulted in their loss of agency. Through abandonment and lack of worship, the gods vacated the statues, leaving them lifeless. This is just the sort of change in an object's meaning that might necessitate a ritual of closure, the burial of a lifeless idol, or even its physical destruction through decapitation or fragmentation.

Not only was the burial and fragmentation of lifeless idols an appropriate and respectful way of disposing of the former housing of a divinity, or a means of deactivating a divine image, it could also serve a protective function. Between the gods and men, pagan thought recognized the existence of malevolent lesser spirits, which could both inflict harm on humans as well as help them. Greco-Roman magical practices were often addressed to such spirits, or demons, who, according to both Celsus and Porphyry, were attracted by the blood of sacrifices, libations, the smell of incense, and other earthly pleasures. For Christians, it was evil spirits of this sort had always occupied idols.[166] But for pagans, however, the danger of empty idols may have been that an evil spirit could occupy an abandoned idol after the divinity had left it. By physically destroying or disposing of them this was prevented.

Cross-cultural comparisons confirm that this is a plausible explanation, and include the South American shaman's breaking of figurines that had served as vessels to other-worldly beings discussed earlier. An even closer parallel can be found in the Hindu tradition, where a number of medieval texts address the question of how long an idol retains its divinity after it has been damaged or abandoned. Most of these texts agree that minor damage, in which an idol is still recognizable, does not cause it to lose its divinity, or requires only expiatory rituals for the idol to retain its divine status. Serious damage, or long-term displacement and lack of worship, however, can cause divinities to forsake their idols completely and permanently. In such instances, at least one text insists that the idol should be discarded "since that *linga* (idol) may become home to goblins and demons." The abandoned images are burned, melted, or sunk into bodies of water.[167]

Presumably the same sort of logic is at work in the burial of the old idols in the Nabakalevara celebration. In religious traditions like Hinduism, or the polytheism of the Roman world, in which worship is focused on physical objects that contain a divine presence, rituals of closure are essential for dealing with this material at the end of its useful life.

CONCLUSIONS ON THE DEATH OF IDOLS

Just as cult images and idols were born over different periods of time, and changed in function throughout their lives, they also expired at different times and for different reasons. Most of the Jupiter columns and Mithraic reliefs were between one and two hundred years old at the time of their destruction or deposition, while the busts from Avenches and Tawern, and the sculptures of the Altbachtal and Mars Lenus sanctuaries were even older still, but an idol could lose its agency at any time.

The need to destroy or replace an idol might be due to accidental damage or pollution, a perceived failure of an idol's agency in the eyes of its worshipers, or the usurpation by another cult image, as may have happened in the Mercury temple at Trier Altbachtal. This meant that older idols needed to be disposed of in one way or another, and this disposal has left a profound, if complicated, impact on the archaeological record.

In the Roman West, wide-scale cult image destruction and deposition began in the later third century AD, with the process continuing well into the early medieval period. The possible agents of this destruction were multiple, including Germanic invaders, Christians, and even pagans themselves. The intensity and form of each group's reaction was varied over time and differed from place to place. While some idols were literally fought over by Christians and pagans, the destruction of cult images and idols did not occur at other temples until they had already been long abandoned. Identifying single parties guilty of cult image destruction, and looking for single motivations for these acts, is a serious oversimplification of what was really a very complicated and multifaceted sequence of events.

An obsession with identifying culprits also distracts from a much more important point provided by the same archaeological evidence. Whatever their identity or motivation, all of those concerned with cult image destruction and deposition, whether German, Christian, or pagan, believed that the objects they were disposing of held a very real power. This power could only be negated by inflicting violence upon them, or mitigated through rituals of closure.

The infliction of more intense forms of destruction on specific images at some single temple sites, or on the specific attributes and figures in single artworks, affirms that some cult images and symbols were deemed more potent or important than others. It was the idols of temples, the recipients of active worship, that were often targeted for especially intensive treatment. Since they held a degree of agency, these idols were the most threatening to Christians and foreign invaders, while it was also critical to pagans that these idols be deactivated and disposed of correctly.

The selection of heads and other body parts for deposition in special circumstances implies that the bodies of these cult images were being punished as if they were the embodiments of divinities. The cult images could use these body parts (and feel through them) just as humans do. This sense of embodiment was a natural and necessary part of an idol's agency. The focus of destructive attention on the active parts of the idol's body, that is, the heads, fingers, hands, and feet, points toward a conscious and planned effort to deprive the image of that agency as well as to punish it. The targeting of specific attributes and symbols is also important, as it demonstrates that the iconography of cult images was still being interpreted, whether or not that interpretation was correct.

As late antiquity wore on into the medieval period, the negative value placed on the aged cult images began to fade, and their smashed remains were increasingly used as building rubble without fear of spiritual or demonic danger. With this total annulment of their significance to contemporary society, the majority of ancient cult images vanished permanently and completely from the archaeological record. Thus most Roman temple sites in Gaul and Germany have yielded no sculptural material at all. Ironically, it was those processes of intentional destruction and deposition that ultimately preserved many cult images intact for posterity. The dead and defeated idols could be recovered from their hiding places, and eventually began new lives in museums.

SEVEN

CONCLUSION

This book opened by making the case for a distinction between idols and other cult images in Roman temples, and its chapters have attempted to explore the use of these objects in their different life phases. Throughout, it has been argued that idols were an important part of Roman religious experience. In closing, we may return briefly to these two points. What was the difference between idols and other cult images, and how much did these idols really matter?

Idols were defined as those cult images and aniconic objects that fulfilled three criteria. They were the recipients of regular worship by large numbers of people, they were displayed in a central position in a temple or sacred enclosure, and they were perceived of as possessing agency or were somehow considered to be divine. Cult images, on the other hand, are a broader category of artworks and objects that include idols, but also votive offerings, and other temple ornaments that were not the subject of regular worship or the center of attention. When looking at the entire sculptural assemblage found at any Roman temple site, it is not unreasonable to ask if it is even possible to distinguish between idols and other cult images.

Since the purely human properties of agency and widescale worship are critical traits of idols, the brief answer seems to be that the two types of cult image are indistinguishable. These are not traits that can be identified by archaeology or art history. Placed in a similar situation, even the Romans resorted to experts like Heraiskos, or consulted learned religious authorities like the pontiffs. Physical appearance alone was not sufficient to make a distinction. But it is important that the Romans did try to separate idols from other cult images, because it shows that this distinction was a real one, and that it mattered on a practical level.

In each of the biographical stages examined in this book, we have seen various clues that might support or refute an object or artwork's idol status. Though we never have a full biography for any single archaeological artefact, these clues sometimes allow us to make a good case about an artwork's status one way or the other, at least for a single moment in its life.

One possible clue, the presence of a votive inscription, turns out to be a red herring. For the most part, votive offerings were not intended to be idols, but were rather expressions of piety and self-advertisement for individuals and groups. Visitors may occasionally have offered sacrifices and libations to other cult images in a sanctuary, and they may even have been thought to have agency by some, but they were not the central attraction that drew visitors to a sanctuary. Thus we are tempted to see a votive inscription as an indicator that an object was not an idol. But the mechanism of the vow could also be used to create new idols, as was the case with the temple and idol of Fortuna Huisce Diei that was vowed and dedicated by the general Q. Lutatius Catulus in Rome, and with the many Jupiter columns that were dedicated by individuals in Gaul and Germany.[1]

The distinction between dedicated images and idols is further complicated by the fact that it was not constant. Secondary votive monuments could be raised to the status of idols, and idols could lose their divinity entirely. These changes were made possible in part by the continuous practice of creating and dedicating images of the gods in temples (Chapters 2 and 3), and the shifting trends in the physical format and appearance of cult images over time.

Contrary to the widely held theories of early aniconic and naturalistic religion, the recent discoveries and other material summarized in this book (Chapter 2) show that worshiped images of the gods were present in both early Rome and in Gaul and Germany in the pre-Roman Iron Age. This observation has important implications in the Roman provinces, since Iron Age monuments, especially those in wood, almost certainly provided the iconographic source material for later provincial religious art. Images of native divinities made in the second and third centuries AD were not new inventions, but had firm roots in earlier artistic traditions.

After a new idol was installed, votive monuments were slowly added to the space around it over long periods of time. Their shape, iconography, and style could follow contemporary artistic trends, or could incorporate the tastes of different cultural and socio-economic groups, for example by combining the attributes of Roman and Celtic divinities. Thus the schematic wooden posts of early Rome and the Iron Age were outpaced by dedications of naturalistic statues in stone, and later still the static images of the earlier periods were supplemented by the complex, lively, and interactive images of the mystery cults. As the original idols of temples became less visually impressive to contemporary viewers, other cult images may well have eroded away the agency and worship once accorded to them.

This pattern of change in the status of cult images was not exclusive to the Roman West. When Pausanias visited Olympia, he described what must have been the archaic idols of Zeus and Hera in the Temple of Hera briefly, noted their great antiquity, and then brusquely remarked that "These are simple works."[2] In the treasuries of Olympia, however, Pausanias also saw and commented on old dedications composed of gold and ivory, but these sculptures were dedications rather than idols.[3] The colossal chryselephantine statues of classical Greece, including Phidias' celebrated Zeus at Olympia, may be seen as large-scale imitations of these early dedications that were outshining the idols of older generations and attracting the attention of temple visitors.[4] Certainly such dedications often won the attention of the likes of Pausanias and Pliny to the cost of a temple's idols. Because of these multiple births of cult images over time, we should imagine any Roman temple as being populated by collections of older and newer images in different styles and materials.

The consequence of this is that the material, form, style, or size of any cult image found at a temple site are in no way infallible proofs that it was an idol. At most excavated temple sites, sculptures are not found in situ, and the temptation to identify the most beautiful or largest as the site's idol should be avoided. The idol could just as easily have been a crude wooden carving that has rotted away, and the more impressive surviving sculpture an offering to it, admired by the temple's visitors, but not perceived of as possessing agency or the subject of regular worship. The continued worship of old aniconic idols in the Roman period, such as the Menhir at Triguères (**Fig. 3.2**), or the Menhir of Kernuz (**Fig. 2.3**), is proof that this could happen. Early statues could retain their agency in the face of newer and better dedications, perhaps due to the force of tradition, stories of their miraculous interventions, or their connections to historical events.

The early and colossal statue of Mercury from Lezoux (**Fig. 3.26**) was inscribed with a prominent votive dedication, and may well have outdone, or tried to outdo, a crude wooden statue or aniconic stone idol in a nearby temple, or perhaps served as the idol of an entirely new temple. Its large size alone does note prove it to have been used in one way or the other. The smaller Mercury found at the center of a temple at Trier Altbachtal (**Fig. 4.6**) had succeeded in becoming an idol, though it was neither larger, artistically better, nor made of a different material than the many other Mercury statues from the same site. It had begun its life as a private votive offering displayed in a secondary position against a wall, but ended up displayed on a base in the middle of a temple, probably replacing a larger statue carved in the round, and looking out toward an altar that was far too big for it. In this case, the context of the now badly mangled statue is fairly conclusive evidence that it was functioning as an idol by the final stage of its life.

Context often provides a better clue to an artwork's status than its physical form. Placement in the center of a temple or ritual enclosure is probably the best indicator that a statue was an idol. The relatively large number of sites in Gaul and Germany where we have evidence for the original display location of images (**Table 4**) further affirms the distinction between the centrally placed idols, and those other cult images that were exhibited in peripheral areas. Though this evidence usually consists of bases and foundations rather than the idols themselves, the idol bases were aligned such that they could be seen easily, and so that the statues mounted on them could see visitors and altars through the temple doors. In Romano-Celtic temples, we even have idol bases situated in the very middle of the cella, presumably to accommodate rites of circumambulation.

As buildings, temples were oriented around idols, and we should really think of the idol as the reason for the temple, and not of the temple as an important building requiring an idol. The less prestigious display locations of other cult images reflect their lower status. They were not placed to be the natural center of attention, and were not usually associated with an altar. Other cult images may have functioned as testimonies to the divinity's power, and as a foreshadowing of the climactic encounter between the god and worshipers, an encounter that the idol, around which sacred space was centered, effectively enabled.

That the centrally placed images and objects in temples were actually worshiped is evidenced by both those snatches of information provided by ancient writers and the archaeology of temple sites themselves. The finds of unguentaria and jewelry scattered around the Alpes idol base at Thun-Allmendingen (**Fig. 5.2**), or the coins scattered around bases of outdoor columnar monuments at Jouars-Ponchartrain and Bavilliers, show that the treatment of idols described by Seneca, Ovid, and others were not merely literary fantasies. In this sense, the archaeological evidence of the western provinces is something of an unexploited resource for understanding phenomena in the Mediterranean Roman world. If we accept the now standard hypothesis that the inhabitants of Gaul and Germany were indeed part of a Roman imperial culture, and not little more than half-civilized barbarians, then the broader applicability of the provincial evidence should not really be surprising.

Though less evidence is available for the original placement of secondary images, so far as we can tell they are not normally surrounded by concentrations of coins and small votive offerings. Unfortunately, the detailed recording of the locations of small finds is a relatively new development in archaeology. The

1926 trench at Thun-Allmendingen is the rare exception, and we have nothing comparable for the near contemporary excavations at the Trier Altbachtal or Mars Lenus sanctuaries. For clusters of votive offerings to be used as an indicator of agency, and the identification of idols, we need not only good recording practices, but also sites where evidence for original placement of sculptures has been preserved. It seems probable that further studies connecting artefacts with a temple's spatial structures will prove extremely productive.

Finally, we find evidence for a functional distinction between idols and other cult images in the complicated processes of cult image destruction, mutilation, and deposition that occurred in late antiquity. Though responses to cult images in late antiquity were more nuanced than is often thought, and involved multiple actors with different agendas, these responses often varied depending on whether or not the object or artwork encountered was thought to possess agency.

When cult images fell victim to the destructive attentions of barbarian invaders and Christian iconoclasts, idols often received more intense destructive treatments than other monuments. The selective destruction found at the Mithraeum at Strasbourg Königshofen (**Fig. 6.3**), where the tauroctony was smashed into more and smaller pieces than other cult images at the site, and the selective mutilation of the face of Mithras on the tauroctony from Osterburken (**Fig. 6.4**) are good examples. The destruction of a community's idols by outsiders, whether they were Christians or German raiders, could achieve the maximum amount of intimidation, since it was these idols who supposedly provided protection to the community, and who offered competition to the new religion.

When pagans themselves buried or otherwise destroyed cult images in ritual acts of closure, they too prioritized idols, the objects that mattered most to them. The mother goddess statues so carefully buried in pits at Le Bernard (**Fig. 6.10**), or the acrolithic Minerva entombed below a temple floor at Avenches (**Fig. 6.9**), were clearly perceived as more important than other votive offerings or temple decorations, and so were chosen for this labor intensive treatment. In other world cultures, expired, used, or damaged idols and power objects are often destroyed, buried, or otherwise carefully disposed of to prevent harmful supernatural forces from occupying them. Whether the bronze head from Mainz Finthen (**Fig. 6.11**), or the sandstone head of Mercury from Tawern (**Fig. 6.7**), were deposited in hostile acts, or ritually buried by pagans is unclear, but the choice of the head, the seeing and communicative part of a statue, was important. Whether initiated by hostile or friendly sources, these special forms of disposal can also be seen as an indicator of a statue or object's status.

No matter how much the modern Western mind may find it irrational, the Romans did treat some of their cult images as idols, and endowed them with agency, or divine power. Some ancient writers were skeptical of this divinity, but the mass of the archaeological evidence in favor of idol worship suggests that theirs was a minority viewpoint. Similar skepticism about idols is well attested in other living cultures where similar systems are in place.[5] Some worshipers may have seen idols as merely symbolic of the gods, others as a tool that allowed the unseen to be worshiped, but many more will have viewed idols as embodiments of the gods. Virtually everyone treated them as if they were, and this is what really matters. As Augustine noted, even Cicero would not have dared to behave any other way in public.[6]

Though we can rarely identify single statues or objects as idols, this was nonetheless a functional category of cult image in the Roman world. If that is the case, just how important was the idol to the Roman religious experience?

In assessing the importance of idol worship in Roman religion, the multiple cult image births over an extended period are illuminative. The very fact that idols were continuously produced and used over many centuries is itself a good indication that they were important to the Roman religious system. Even some of the earliest images of the gods, such as the figures from Vix, or the wooden statue from Yverdon, were associated with offerings and sacrifices, just like the later Roman period idols. The long continuity of sacrifices and small offerings made to idols suggests that the worship of divine images was deemed an effective means of dealing with the gods.

Enough care was taken in the housing, establishment, and staging of idols that they were surely more than mere incidentals to ritual activities within and near the temple. The impressive nature of the idols themselves, their central staging within temples, and the other rituals that were conducted around them all conform to the strategies used to generate and retain agency that were observed by Alfred Gell in other world cultures in which idols play a major role in religious life.

Other strategies were less obvious, but nonetheless show that retaining this sense of agency was important. These include the positioning of idol bases over older features, such as sacrificial pits or burials, and the re-use of fragments of older sculptures inside bases, as at Calès-Mézin. Like the stories connecting some of Rome's idols to the mythical past, these ritual aspects of the idol's staging bestowed upon it a sense of continuity and legitimacy. They emphasized the idol's age, or connection to the past, and thus distracted from its man-made nature. They would not have been needed if idols were mere incidentals to religious experience.

At some Romano-Celtic temple sites, the foundations of idol bases were built before the floors of the cella, indicating that the size and placement of the idol was established before the temple building was constructed. Likewise, the provision of unnecessarily deep foundations and supports for idols found in some Romano-Celtic temples was intended to convey a sense of the permanency and value of the idol, and to accommodate its heavy divine nature. Roman temples were the homes of the gods in the form of physical objects, and the buildings were much less important than what they housed.

The divine presence of idols is similarly reflected in votive reliefs that depict tiny worshipers next to enormous images of the gods, as on the Weiler relief (**Fig. 5.1**), or the Öhringen Epona (**Fig. 5.5**). The idea behind these votive monuments was not to represent the actual size of colossal idols, but to use hierarchical scale to represent the power of the divinity, whom the worshiper was about to encounter in the form of an idol. In the Reims Cernunnos relief, we see a similar testimony to the agency of idols, with Apollo actually descending from his statue base (**Fig. 3.13**). Such reliefs recall that these encounters with divine idols were the highlight of the temple experience, and reduce the temple building to a mere framing device.

During their encounters with idols, the sort of actions worshipers performed (Chapter 5) make it clear that the main function of Roman idols was to allow individuals to communicate with the gods. Proximity to the idol, as well as touching it, whispering in its ear, and being seen by it, were all desirable actions if petitions and prayers were to be effective. The Roman experience was analogous to the Hindu concepts of *puja* and *darshan*, in which the function of the idol (*murti*) is to allow human forms of communication with divine beings.

Like a human being, a Roman idol could accept gifts and monetary payments, smell perfume, taste food, and feel anointing oil, just as if it had a human body. It could wear human clothes and jewelry, and even lived in a house within a local community, enjoying pleasures, honors, and experiences similar to those of elite individuals. Because the idol could accept these pleasures, it was natural that it could also be expected to hear requests, and to respond and intervene in earthly society. By interacting with idols on a human level, worshipers endowed their idols with agency on a human level, and continuously reaffirmed it. This sense of agency was both what made idol worship make sense, and a critical component of Roman religious life.

In both Rome and the provinces, idols allowed for communication with the gods on a communal level as well. Public sacrifices, the carrying of idols in processions, and ritual bathing, not only affirmed the status of the idol as divine, but were also a form of mass interaction with the divinity. In Rome, ritual activity served to maintain the *pax deorum* for the city, and idols were very much part of this process.[7] The polite acquisition of the statue of Juno of Veii, or the careful chaining of the idol of Saturn and the Palladion, were actions undertaken for the good of the community's relationship with the gods. The post-like idols of Iron Age Gaul probably received high value and large scale sacrifices for the same reason, just as communities placated their successors in Romano-Celtic temples with less valuable gifts. Though the form of idols and the sorts of offerings and sacrifices given to them changed, the main function of the idol itself did not.

The care taken in the destruction and disposal of idols also underscored their religious importance. Germanic invaders would not have smashed any Roman cult images if these monuments had meant nothing to the communities that possessed them. If idols were not essential to pagan religious practice, then Christian saints would not have needed to perform miracles to destroy them. These monks and holy men viewed the destruction of idols as a critical step in the erasure of pagan error and the establishment of Christianity. Nor would pagans themselves have taken the trouble to hide or ritually dispose of their idols if they could do without them, but could have let them be destroyed and violated without fear of divine repercussions and loss of easy access to the gods.

While it is impossible to distinguish between idols and other cult images on the basis of their physical form alone, a distinction did exist. In evaluating Roman cult images, it is critical to look closely at all the available evidence, such as placement, context, and the relationship of idols to structures and small finds, if we are to understand the function of these objects in their original temple setting. Whether we see it in terms of an epiphany, a ritual viewing, or as a religious construct comparable to Hinduism's *darshan*, the encounter with an idol was a significant and tangible experience in which the Romans encountered their gods. The value of idols as objects possessed of divine agency greatly exceeded their aesthetic, artistic, and iconographic qualities to which we attach so much weight and importance when we view them in museums today.

APPENDIX

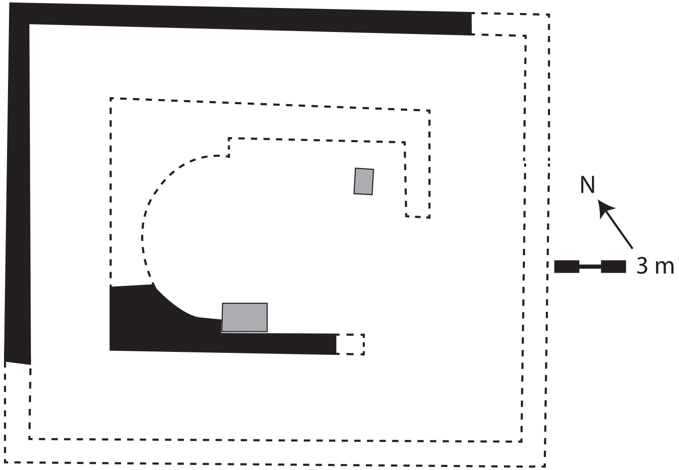
TABLE 4 *Roman temples with evidence for idol placement*

1. Altbachtal, Trier (structure 1/2)

Romano-Celtic temple with gallery, apse for the idol, and two secondary bases in the cella. A later lime-kiln built in the south-east corner destroyed much of the building. See text.

Cella interior: 7 m × 7 = 49 m^2 (without apse)
Apse (for idol): 7.06 m^2 **Bases**: NE: 1.02 × 0.74 m, Th. 5 cm = 0.75m^2 - a limestone plate imbedded in the temple's second mortar floor. NW: 1.15 × 1.75 H 0.45 m = 2.01 m^2 - a white sandstone socle the on first mortar floor.
Free Space: 45.81 m^2

Biblio.: Gose 1972, 12-15; Trunk 1991, 229-30, no. M9.



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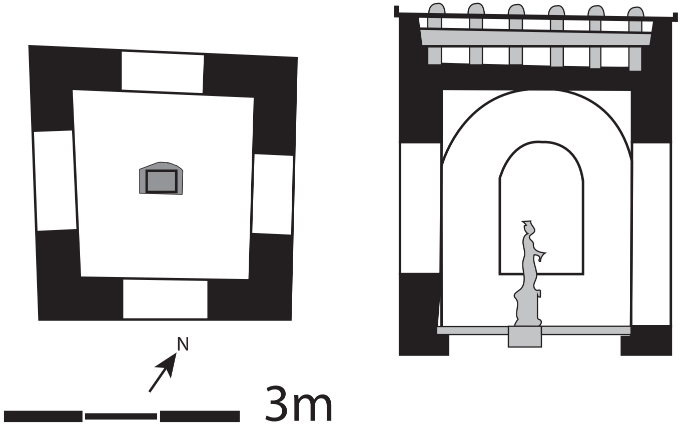
2. Altbachtal, Trier (structure 4)

Simple square cella, with two-part socle, an inscribed base with attached idol standing on a re-used inscription plate.
Cella door present and three windows. See text.

Cella interior: 2.2 × 2.5 m = 5.5 m^2
Socle: 0.39 × 0.30 m, H. 0.55 m, on a 0.26 × 0.57 m, H. 0.40 m foundation (the inscription).
Door: 1.03 m; **Windows:** 1.23, 1.03, 1.01 m
Free space: 5.27-2.2 m^2 (if standing in front of idol)

Biblio: Gose 1972, 19-24.

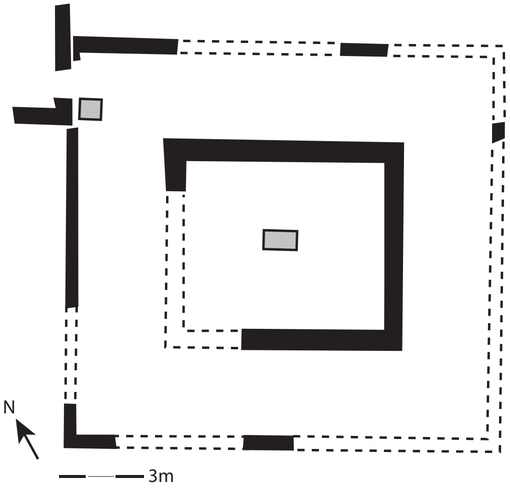


3. Altbachtal, Trier (structure 12)

A Romano-Celtic style temple with gallery, its walls mostly robbed out. In middle of the cella is a rectangular sandstone socle on a packed stone foundation built directly on the cella's mortar floor. A mother-goddess statue still *in situ* in north-west of the gallery, where it connects to another temple. See text.

Cella interior: 7 × 7 m = 49 m^2 **Socle**: 1.16 × 0.73 m, H, 0.45 m; **Foundation**: H. 0.17 cm **Free space**: 48.15 – 40.3 m^2

Biblio.: Gose 1972, 81-2, fig. 42.

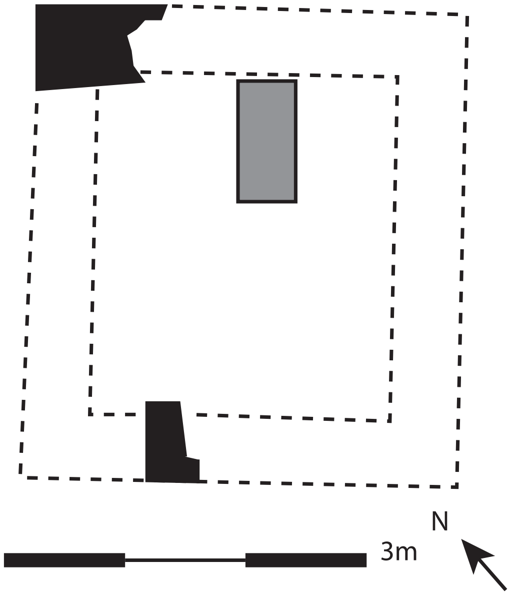


4. Altbachtal, Trier "*Stierkapelle*" (structure 23)

A square cella with columnar socle supporting a statue of a bull. See text.

Cella interior: 2.5 × 2.2 m = 5.5 m^2
Socle: Dm. 0.42 m, H. 0.41 m.
Idol: L. 0.92 m, H. 0.72 m
Free space: 5.11m^2

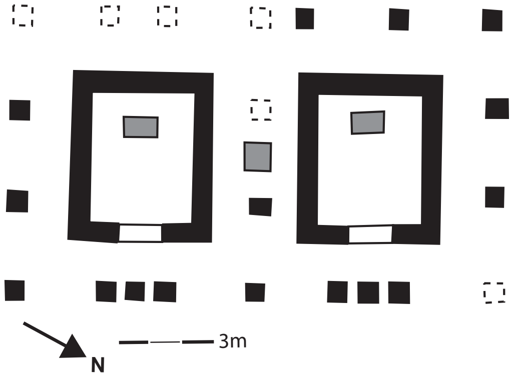
Biblio.: Gose 1972, 85-6.



5. Bierbach Klosterwald, Saarland
Two identical cellae with a shared gallery, like Puy Lautard. First to late fourth century A.D. Two socles of massive blocks of sandstone are imbedded deep into floor foundation and aligned with doors and altar bases in front.

Cella interiors: 3.5 × 4.2 m = 14.7 m^2
Socle: 1.0 × 0.6 m, H. ca.0.6 m.
Door: 1.6 m
Free space: 14.1– 7.13 m^2

Biblio.: Klein 1927; 1929; Kolling 1993, 128-30.



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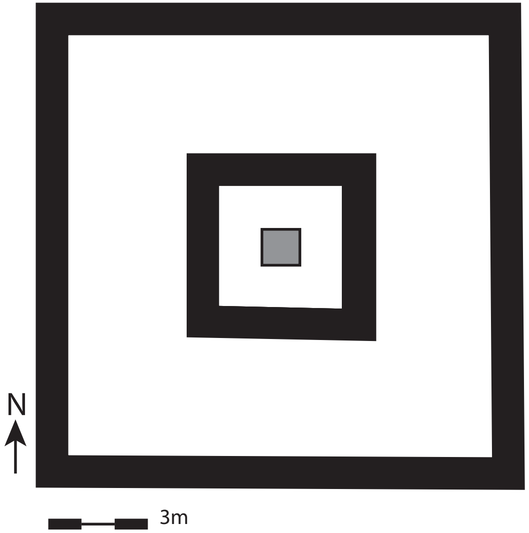
6. Buis, Fôret des Louviers, Eure
Romano-Celtic temple with gallery. Excavated 1891 and 1894. The socle is a raised platform of stone blocks on a pressed clay floor. The area around the blocks is was burned, and an indecipherable coin was found in the space between the blocks.

Cella interior: 3.74 × 3.74 m = 13.98 m^2
Socle: 0.98 × 0.98 m
Free space: 13.02–5.1 m^2

Biblio.: de Vesly 1909, 26-40, fig. 8.

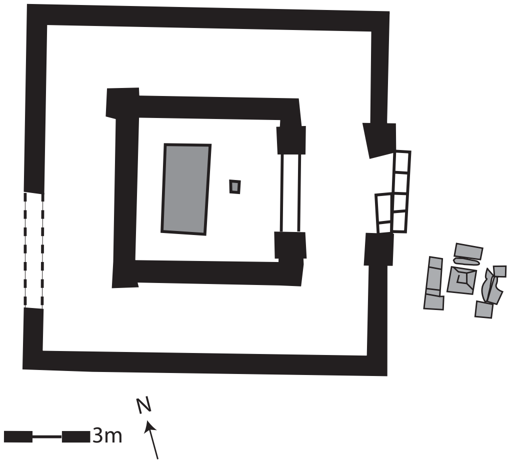


7. Crain, Yonne

Romano-Celtic temple with gallery. Socle is an impression in the mortar floor with a smaller impression for an offering table (?) in front of it. Door of cella and gallery aligned with socles, money box to south of gallery entrance. See text.

Cella interior: 5.02 × 5.09 m = 25.55 m^2
Socle: 3.0 × 1.5 m; **Offering Table**: 0.3 × 0.3 m
Free space: 21.05-7.63 m^2 (if small base is closest point of approach for visitors).

Biblio: CAG 89/1.129.325, fig. 358 (Delor, 2002); Devauges 1973.



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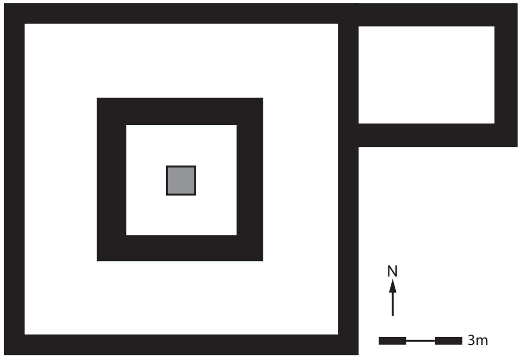
8. Harfleur, Seine-Maritime

Romano-Celtic temple with a gallery and an annex. A mosaic floor preserved in parts in gallery and cella. Socle is a deep negative impression in the floor, presumably contained a block-like base.

Socle: 1 × 1 m, depth 1 m
Cella interior: 4 × 4 m = 16 m^2
Free space: 15-7 m^2

Biblio.: de Vesly 1909, 18-20 19 fig. 5; Naef 1894.

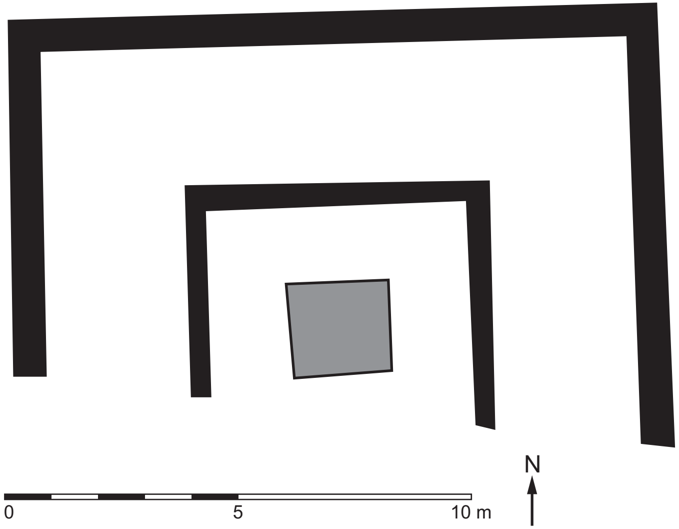


9. Jouars-Ponchartrain, Yvelines

Romano-Celtic Temple with gallery built A.D. 50-100, the idol base was added in an expansion of the third century. It is made of *opus caementitium* with red paint on outside, and covers a pit of the Tiberian/Claudian period.

Cella interior: 5.84 × 5.84 m = 34.1 m^2
Socle: 2 × 2 m
Free space: 30.1–18.1 m^2

Biblio.: Blin 2000, 104-14, figs. 12 and 13.



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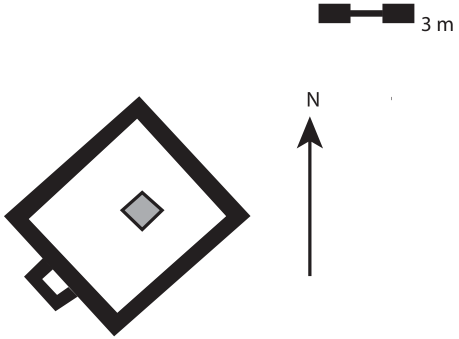
10. Magny-Cours, Nièvre

Temple 2, a simple cella, stands next to the north east of a larger temple with a gallery, and was built in the early first century A.D. to the Flavian period. A foundation of stones for a socle, seems to be very slightly off-set from the temple's door.

Cella interior: 4.05 × 4.60 m = 18.6 m^2
Socle: 0.9 × 0.9 m
Door/Porch: ca. 1.0 m.
Free space: 17.79–5.06 m^2

Biblio.: Tisserand and Nouvel 2013.

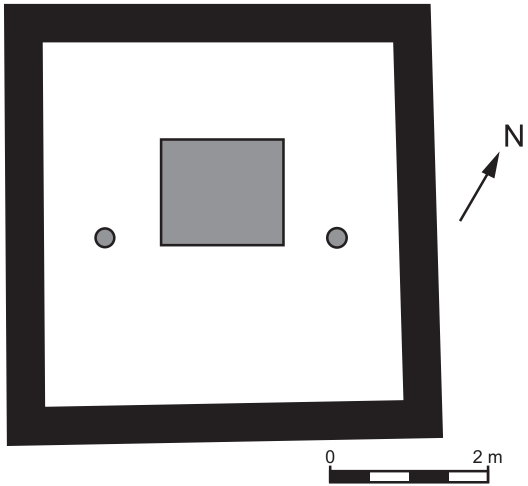


11. Matagne-la-Grande, Temple C, Belgium

Built ca. A.D. 350, and destroyed by the end of the fourth century. Located outside the main *temenos* walls of the site. The socle is of masonry and mortar, built below the earliest floor, with its foundations on level with those of the walls. Next to the base are two circular holes in the floor. Coins and jewellery were found clustered around the socle.

Cella interior: 4.6 × 4.6 m = 21.16 m^2
Socle: 1.55 × 1.35 m
Free space: 19.07-9.2 m^2 (using round holes as limit)

Biblio.: Cattelain and Paridaens 2009, fig. 29; Brulet 2008, 520-2.



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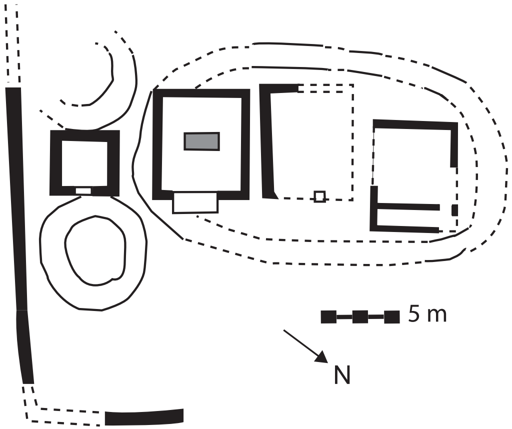
12. Mouzon, Bois des Flaviers, cella 3, Ardennes

Site used as temple from late La Tène to fourth century A.D. Base appears in Augustan phase on top of an Iron Age hearth. Preserved as a depression in a mortar floor.

Cella interior: 6.25 × 5 m = 31.2 m^2
Socle: 2.4 × 1 m
Door: 2.4 m.
Free space: 28.8-6.5 m^2

Biblio: Caumont 2011, esp. 41-60; Kiernan 2009, 47-51.

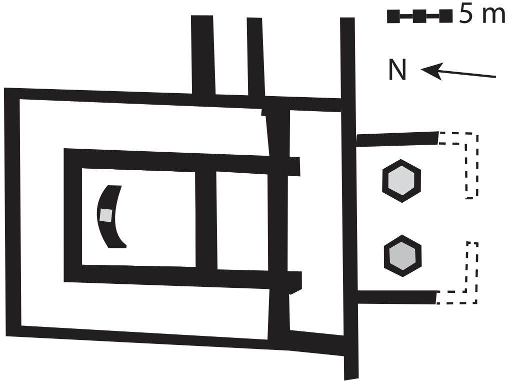


13. Neuenstadt am Kocher, Mars Grannus Temple, (Baden-Wurtemberg)

A curved bench of bricks built directly on a mortar floor and covered with plaster, with a sandstone block in the middle. Two hexagonal water basins stood on a lower terrace directly below the temple.

Cella interior: 8.3 × 9.5 m = 78.8 m^2; **Free space:** 43.2 m^2
Curved Bench: L. 4.6 m, W. 1.2 m, H. 50 cm (complete);
Socle: 0.80 × 0.80 m

Biblio: Kortüm 2017; Kortüm and Krmnicek, forthcoming.



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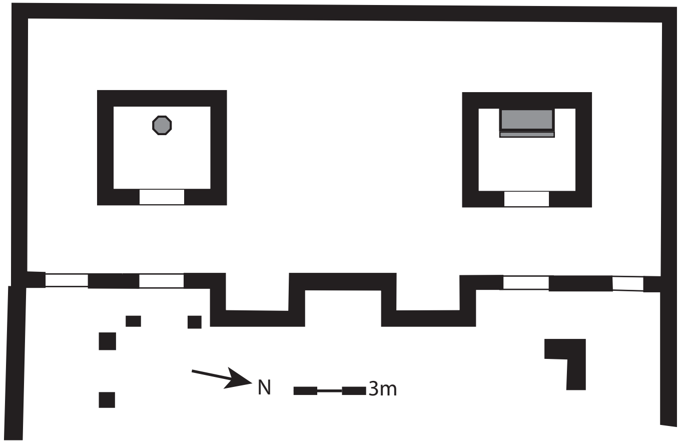
14. Puy Lautard, Creuse

Double cellae covered by single gallery. In the north cella, a rectangular base in *opus caementitium*, and step in front, plated with tiles and mortar with red paint, and with step in front. In the south cella, an octagonal base of granite blocks with limestone relief decoration. See text.

Cellae interiors: 4.15 × 3.54 m = 12.98 m^2; **N. Socle:** 2.2 × 0.8 m, H. 0.28 m; **S. Socle**: Dm. 0.62 m, H. 0.77 m; **Doors**: w. 1.8 m; **Free space N.**: 11.22–4.69 m^2; **Free space S.**: 12.68–5.18 m^2

Bilbio.: Marquaire 1994.

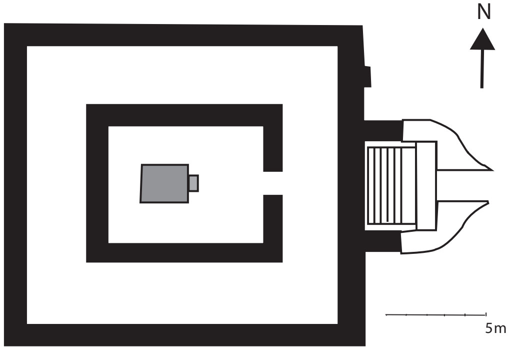


15. Saint-Aubin-sur-Gaillon, Eure

Romano-Celtic temple on a podium. A socle of *opus caementitium*, with a step in front and fragments of limestone (or possibly marble) facing attached to it., is aligned with the cella door.

Cella interior: 6 × 7.72 = 46.3 m^2
Socle: 1.8 × 2.0 m, H. ca. 1 m preserved; Door: w. 1 m.
Free space: 42.7–19.62 m^2 (using step as front limit)

Biblio: CAG 27.369.184–5 (1993, Cliquet); Grenier 1960, 742–3; Coutil 1898–1921, 256–271; Poulain 1912 and 1914.



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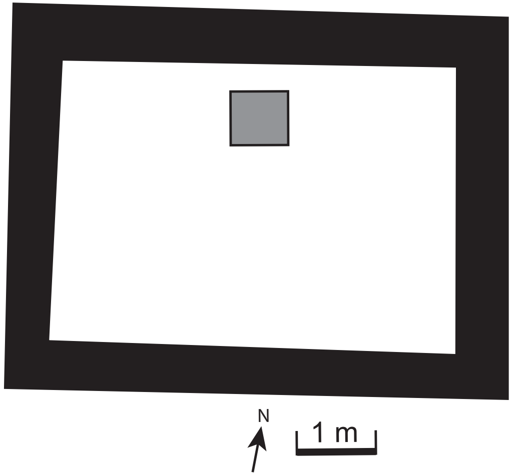
16. Thun Allmendingen, Temple 6, Switzerland

Simple square cella with square limestone base at back wall, with dedicatory inscription to Alpes. See **chapter 5**.

Cella interior: 5 × 4 m = 20 m^2
Socle: 0.7 × 0.7 m, H. 0.98 m
Free space: 19.51–6.89 m^2

Biblio.: Martin-Kilcher and Schatzmann 2009.

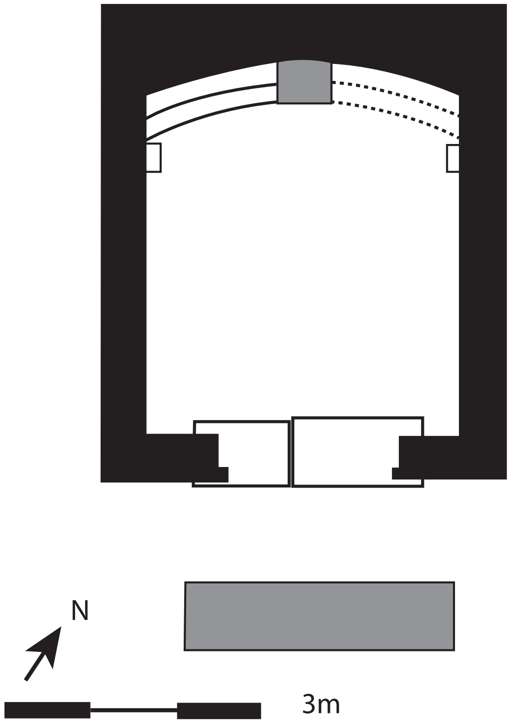


17. Trier, Mars Lenus Temple, mother goddess temple

Idol displayed on raised bench (*adyton*) incorporated into the apse. Large foundation for altars outside, aligned with door and socle. See text.

Cella interior: 4.3 × 3.6 m = 15.4 m^2 (excluding apse)
Socle: 0.8 × 0.8 m = 0.64 m^2
Free space: 15.4 m^2

Biblio.: See text.



For the sake of consistency, and to highlight the place of statue bases, the plans in the table have been redrawn from the published illustrations. Both the presumed idol base, as well as other foundations and bases for other cult images, are shaded in grey. Walls and foundations are indicated by solid black lines, while shapes with a white interior and solid outlines represent flat and low surfaces, such as paths and thresholds. Robbed-out walls and presumed features are denoted with dashed lines with white interiors.

The free space calculated within each cella is given as a maximum and minimum value in square meters. The minimum value assumes that individuals inside the cella stood at least 1 m away from the idol base.

NOTES

CHAPTER 1

1 Tert. *De Spect.* 8.9 (Translation by S. Thelwall).

2 Jenkyns (2013, 193–234) gives a sense of what we have and what is lost for the ancient Roman world, and emphasizes an experiential approach to Roman religion. On the reification and definition of Roman religion, and the views of Romans on *religio,* see Rüpke 2013, 7–8 and 22–34; and Ando 2008, 1–22.

3 These include the German handbooks of Roman religion of Wissowa (1912) and its revised edition of Latte (1960), as well as the more recent two-volume work of Beard, North, and Price (1998), which has become something of a standard textbook on Roman religion in the English-speaking world. Downplaying the role of images is also common, e.g. Rives 2007, 32–3: "'idolatry' naturally implies that images of the gods were the all-important and essential focus of worship. But this was far from the case."

4 Recent studies on images in Greek religion: Faraone 1992; Scheer 2000; Mylonopoulos 2010; Platt 2011; Gaifmann 2012 (on aniconic idols). Roman world: the brief comments of MacMullan (1981, 42–6 and 76) are a rare exception. The few recent discussions on idols in the Roman world include Ando 2008, 21–42; Rüpke 2010 and 2013, 52–62. A list of textual references and art works depicting interaction with both Greek and Roman cult images is provided with a minimal commentary in the *ThesCRA* 2:419–507 (Linant de Bellefonds et al., 2004).

5 Waghorne 1985, 1–7.

6 Martin (1987) and Vermeule (1987) are both concerned with the appearance and art history of idols in Republican and Imperial Rome respectively. A good discussion of the social role of cult images is given by Stewart 2003, 184–222. Madigan (2013) discusses portable cult images, which he terms "ceremonial sculptures." Kristensen (2013b) provides the best and most extensive discussion of cult images in the Roman world today, though he is primarily focused on the issue of late antique responses, and evidence from Egypt and the Near East.

7 Hölscher 2004; Zanker 1988.

8 For recent advances on the social function of Roman statues see Stewart 2003 and 2008. On viewer response and the setting of Roman images see Elsner 2007 and Platt 2011. Scott (2006) discusses the dangers of a purely aesthetic and stylistic approach to Roman art.

9 On the term "museum effect," see Alpers 1991; Davis 1997, 23–4; Platt 2011.

10 Davis 1997, 19–20; Waghorne 1992.

11 Gordon 1979, 5–8.

12 Ries 1987, 80.

13 On modern terminology see Donohue 1997, 3; Scheer 2000, 4–8; Boschung 2007, 65–6. The German term "*Tempelkultbild*" used by Martin (1987) makes it clear that the image is the one housed in a temple, but of course a temple could contain many cult images in addition to its central idol or idols. Jenkyns (2013, 235, note 1) advocated for "cult statue" and misinterpreted the title of Martin's 1987 book (erroneously cited as 1992 by Jenkyns), which was unavailable to him, as referring to all cult images. This misunderstanding only reinforces the need for clearer definitions.

14 Mylonopoulos 2010. The same trick has been employed in French by Estienne 2001 with her "*images divines.*"

15 Flueckiger 2015, 79. Thus, for example, Raj, Rajagopalan, and Sundaram 2000; Levy et al. 2008.

16 Gell 1998, 96; Rüpke 2010, 182 and 2013, 52–3.

17 Estienne 2010, 258–61. On the use of *imago* for busts see Daut 1975.
18 Estienne 2010, 260, table 1.
19 Stewart 2003, 186–8.
20 Estienne 2010, 259; Cic. *Verr* 2.4.72–83.
21 Donohue 1997, 37; Gordon 1979, 7–8.
22 Philip 1968; Donohue 1997, 35; Scheer 2000, 8–34 (with further bibliography).
23 Stewart 2003,186–7; Scheer 2000, 33; Spivey 1996, 45.
24 Donohue 1997; Cp. ThesCRA 2:418 (Linant de Bellefonds, 2004) and De Clerc 1915, 4.
25 Donohue 1997, 40–3. On the lack of terminology cp. Bremmer 2013, 7–8.
26 Livy 26.34: *quae eorum sacra ac profana essent ad pontificum collegium reiecerunt.*
27 On this point see Estienne 2010.
28 Livy 38.43.4–6 (Translation by E. Sage).
29 Livy 38.44.5: *signa aliaque ornamenta, quae quererentur ex aedibus sacris sublata esse, de iis, cum M. Fulvius Romam revertisset, placere ad collegium pontificum referri, et quod ii censuissent, fieri.*
30 Livy 5.22.3–7, reproduced in Chapter 2. On the chaining of statues to prevent *evocatio*, Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 61, and futher *ThesCRA* 2:468–9 (Icard-Gioanolio, 2004).
31 Suet. *Tib.* 26: *Templa, flamines, sacerdotes decerni sibi prohibuit, etiam statuas atque imagines nisi permittente se poni; permisitque ea sola condicione, ne inter simulacra deorum sed inter ornamenta aedium ponerentur.*
32 Plin. *Pan.* 52.1–3.
33 Estienne 2010.
34 CIL 9.3513 = EDCS-14804538.
35 Estienne 2010, 263. Thus, in 217 BC, Rome received the offer of golden bowls from the temples of Neapolis to help finance the war with Hannibal (Livy 22.32.4–7); in 82 BC, gold and silver from Rome's temples was melted down to pay troops to fight Sulla (Val. Max. 7.6.4); in 41 BC Caesar's troops collected votive offerings from temples in Italy and Rome to raise money for the civil war (Cass. Dio 48.12.4).
36 "Heraiskos" Suda Online. Tr. C. Roth 2006. www.stoa.org/sol-entries/eta/450 Cp. chapter 6.
37 August. *De Psalmos* 113(115).2.5. Text from Migne 37.1184 (my translation).
38 Mylonopoulos 2010.
39 Boschung 2007.
40 On these points see Baynes 1960, 118. Idols as being made of base materials: Justin, *Apol.* 1.12 (cp. Hdt. 2.172); Mathetes *Epist.* 2; Arn. *Adv. nat.* 6.15. Incidentally, this particular point was not new. Herodotus relates how Amasis had a golden bowl used for washing feet, and catching urine and vomit that was melted down and made into an image of a god that was subsequently worshiped by the Egyptians (Hdt. 2.172). Idols as a temptation to thieves: Justin, *Apol.* 1.12; Mathetes *Epist.* 2; Arn. *Adv. nat.* 6.20–1. Lucian (*Timon the Misanthrope*, 4) berates the statue of Zeus at Olympia's failure to protect itself from thieves. Idols suffering iniquities and decay: Arnobius (*Adv. nat.* 6.16) speaks of cobwebs, rats, mice building their nests in idols, and animals defecating upon them.
41 On the base nature of idol makers: Baynes 1960, 118. Justin, *Apol.* 1.12 (cp. Wisdom 13.16; Origen, *C. Cels.*, 1.5: Celsus citing Zeno of Citium (335–263 BC); Mathetes *Epist.* 2; Arn. *Adv. nat.* 6.14; Hor. *Sat.* 1.8.1.
42 Deception: Arn. *Adv. nat.* 6.16; cp. 4.6 in which touching the knees and feet of statues causes them to collapse.
43 Pagan agreement with Christian criticism: According to Augustine (*De Civ. D.* 4.30), Cicero also condemned the use of images as superstitious (4.30*: Haec utique cum tamquam superstitiosa culpantur, inplicat ista culpa maiores talium simulacrorum institutores atque cultores . . . . . . nec quod in hac disputatione disertus insonat, muttire auderet in populi contione* – "when he finds fault with these things as superstitious, he certainly casts aspersions on the ancestors who set up and worshipped such images . . . . . . and things that he, as a learned man, loudly proclaims in this treatise, he would not dare to whisper in the popular assembly." (Translation by W. Green). Tertullian (*Apol.* 12.6) claimed that Seneca's *de superstitione* was critical of image worship. Origen (*C. Cel* 1.5) preserves a fragment of the pre-socratic philosopher Heracleitus, who equated praying to statues with talking to houses. Similarly, the second century BC satirist Lucilius (15.524–9) wrote that those who believe fables are like little children who believe bronze statues are alive and human, with a heart inside them: *Ut pueri infantes credunt signa omnia aena vivere et esse homines, sic isti somnia ficta vera putant, credunt signis cor inesse in aenis*. Lucilius seems to refer to all bronze statues, but Lactantius (*Div. inst.*, 1.22.13), who preserves this fragment,

equates them with idols: *Lucilius eorum stultitiam, qui simulacra deos putant esse, deridet his versibus.*

44 Baynes 1960, 118–19; Cp. Ando 2008, 27–31.

45 McCracken 1949, 5–6.

46 Stewart 2003, 185. Cp. Iles Johnston (2008, 450) who sees the Christian arguments as a response to sentiments that existed only in Platonic philosophy.

47 Gell 1998, 115. Gell promptly notes that skepticism about the power of images has been observed amongst uneducated worshipers as well.

48 August. *De civ. D.* 6.10 (Translation by W. Green).

49 Kristensen (2013b, 48) warns that this should not be seen as a dichotomy between educated and uneducated, since educated individuals clearly held similar beliefs as well, notably Pausanias. This is also the conclusion of Scheer (2000, 4–8) in her discussion of the matter in Greek terminology.

50 Strong 1987, 97.

51 August. *De civ. D.* 4.30 and Tert. *Apol.* 12.6. See above note 38.

52 Orme 1981, 22–5; Hodder 1983, 12–15.

53 Eriksen 2004, 34–7. For a theoretical overview of anthropological comparison see Moore and Sanders 2006,1–19. Resistance to cross-cultural approaches, especially in comparing ancient to modern societies, dates back to Franz Boas, e.g. Boas 1896. On the history of this repugnance to a comparative approach amongst ancient historians, especially in 20th century France, see Detienne 2008, 1–21.

54 Orme 1981, 23–5. Hodder 1983, 16–24.

55 Durkheim 1964, 102–65; cp. Evans-Pritchard 1965, 56–67.

56 Gell 1998. Though widely praised and cited, Gell's book has not been uncontroversial, not least due to the book's elusive language and complex terminology, which discusses art in terms of agency, indices, prototypes, artists, and recipients. For a critique see Bowden 2004.

57 Gell 1998, 99–101.

58 Gell 1998, 133–53.

59 Gell 1998, 144–6; Davis 1997, 140–1; Eck 1985, 53–5; Mishra 1971, 139–41; Starza 1993, 86–7. We will return to the ritual in Chapter 6, with a consideration of the disposal of the old idols. The last Nabakalevara took place from March 29th to July 27th in 2015.

60 Kristensen 2013b, 49. On the animation of statues in the Greek world see Iles Johnston 2008. On the Near East see Walker and Dick 1999, and on Egypt see Lorton 1999.

61 Elgood 1999, 14; Davis (1997, 32–4) notes that medieval Hindu texts instruct that images of Vishnu should be impressive and beautiful images explicitly to attract admiration and followers, and thus contributing to the establishment of the divinity within the image and to its power to influence people.

62 Gell (1998, 97–8) described aniconic idols as "artefactual bodies" for divinities rather than the photographic portraits of the gods that are provided by iconic idols. In terms of their social agency, they functioned in a similar manner. On Greek aniconism see Gaifmann 2012.

63 Eck 1985, 35–6; Davis 1997, 18–21.

64 Gaifman 2012. Cp. Gordon 1979, 11–17.

65 Durkheim 1964.

66 Elgood 1999, 38; Davis 1997, 31–5.

67 Eck 1985 46–7.

68 Flueckiger 2015, 77–80. The Hindu reformer Raja Rammohun Roy, perhaps influenced by western thinking, actually campaigned against idol use in modern Hinduism (Sharma 2002, 9–11).

69 Eck 1985. Gell 1998, 116–20. On *darshan* as an analogy to Greek pilgrimage and the term *theoria* see Rutherford 1990.

70 Rutherford 1990.

71 Platt 2002 and 2011; Elsner 1995 and 2007.

72 Elsner 2007.

73 Platt 2011, 10–13.

74 Elsner 1995, 89–9; Platt 2011, 82–3.

75 Orme 1981, 218–22.

76 An attempt to apply Dumézil's views to some of the Romano-Celtic art explored in this book has been made by Hatt (1989).

77 Flueckiger 2015, 2–3.

78 On the life-span and biographies of Hindu *murti* and other images, see Davis 1997.

79 Kopytoff 1986, 68–70; Gosden and Marshall 1999. Kristensen (2013a, 23–7) explores the life-history approach to ancient statuary in terms of post-processual archaeological theory, with attention to the utility of the model in understanding the recycling of Roman statues in late antiquity.

80 Davis 1997 has advocated this approach for cult images in the Hindu world.

81 Iles Johnston (2008) points out that most evidence for the consecration of objects is from

very late antiquity, and really describes magical rather than religious practices.

82 On the questions of Celts and Germans, ethnicity, and identity in Iron Age Europe see Lund 1998; James 1999; Wells 2001; Collis 2006; Fernandéz-Götz 2013 and 2014, esp. 13–24. Questions of identity in the Romano-Celtic world will be addressed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 2

1 On the varied categorizations of aniconism and their utility, see Mettinger 1995, 19–20; Platt 2011, 200–5; Gaifmann 2012, 29; Potts 2014, 80–1.

2 The extant stories of the earliest idols in the city of Rome are explored in the next section, and are summarized in Table 2.

3 The monuments discussed are summarized in Table 3.

4 Martin 1987, 14–18; Latte 1960, 50–61; Muth 1978, 333; Fowler 1911, 144–64.

5 Fowler 1911, 145–6.

6 August. *De Civ. D.* 4.31 (translation by W. M. Green).

7 Plut. *Num.* 8.7–8 (translation by B. Perrin).

8 Tert. *Apol.* 25.12–13. Author's translation.

9 Plin. *HN* 35.157; Latte 1960, 151; Vermeuele 1987, 53–4; Martin 1987, 28–31. Martin (1987, 15) dates Vulca of Veii to the reign of Tarquinius Priscus, but I follow here the more conventional chronology putting him in the late sixth century. For the date of the statue's destruction in the civil war of Sulla, see Plut. *De Is. Et Os.* 71. Potts (2015, 82) suggests the statue of Vulca was not necessarily the cult statue, but rather an offering.

10 Plin. *HN* 34.10a.

11 Martin 1987, 15 and 21–43. At the time of the destruction of the statue's clothes the image was in the possession of Sejanus (Plin. *HN* 8.197).

12 On the Diana of the Aventine see Dion Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.26.4. Strabo's claim (Strabo 4.1.1–5) that the Diana was a copy of the Massalian Artemis, itself a copy of the Ephesian statue, must be incorrect. A denarius of 48 BC depicting the statue in the Aventine temple is quite different from the Ephesian goddess. See LIMC 2:793 and 796–7 no. 1, *s.v.* Artemis/Diana (Simon and Bauchhenß, 1984) and also no. 192, a denarius of L. Hostilius Saserna = RRC no. 448,3, pl. 53.9. The temple of Diana was built with contributions from other Latins in the same way that the temple in Ephesus was a pan-Ionian effort. See Vermeule 1987, 49; Richardson 1992, 108–9.

13 Plin. *HN* 12.5.

14 Hunt 2016, 261–2.

15 Potts 2015, 75–84.

16 I adopt the traditional names of these artworks here. On the representations of the gods and cult images in Etruscan art see Rask 2011.

17 Potts (2015, 75–8, fig. 19) suggests that the Minerva of Lavinium may have been a votive rather than a cult image, since it was found with fragments of smaller terracotta statuettes. She is equally dubious of the status of a naked marble female identified as a Venus from Orvieto's Cannicella sanctuary, and of a single tuff head from the Celle Sanctuary at the Civita Castellana, which are both sometimes described as idols (Potts 2015, 77–8, figs. 20 and 21; see also Rask 2011, 95–7, figs. 2 and 3.) In the case of the Minerva, however, the statue's size seems to set it quite apart from other votive offerings found near it.

18 Martin 1987, 27, fig. 3 (dating the piece between 400 and 350); LIMC 2:1058, no. 100, s.v. Athena/Menerva (Colonna, 1984); Potts 2015, 75–6, fig. 19. Now in the Museo Archeologico Lavinium.

19 Bottini, Rainini, and Isnenghi Colazzo 1976, 374–82, nos. 8–23, figs. 5–8. Martin 1987, 20, LIMC 6:400–2, no. 1, s.v. Mefitis, (Mambella, 1992). The sculptures are now in Il Museo Irpino, Avellino.

20 Livy 2.32.3–4; Plin. *HN* 35.158.

21 Plin. *HN* 34.15–16 and 34.34. Martin 1987, 47–9.

22 Plin. *HN* 35.157–8. My translation. Cp. Martin 1987, 19–20.

23 Livy 34.4.4–5: "Iam nimis multos audio Corinthi et Athenarum ornamenta laudantes mirantesque et antefixa fictilia deorum Romanorum ridentes. Ego hos malo propitios deos et ita spero futuros, si in suis manere sedibus patiemur." (Translation above by E. T. Sage). Perhaps the passage deals with luxurious statues on display in temples (ornamenta) as Livy contrasts them to antefixes rather than simulacra.

24 Martin 1987, 50–1.

25 Pliny *HN* 34.34; Val. Max. 9.1.

26 Macrob. *Sat.* 3.9.7–13. On *evocatio* see Latte 1960, 125 and Gustaffson 2000.

27 On Veii, Livy 5.21.3, Latte 1960, 164; On *evocatio* in other cities and places: Macrobius *Sat.* 3.9.13.

28 Livy 5.22.3–7 (Translation by A. de Sélincourt).

29 Livy, *Per.* 11: *cum pestilentia civitas laboraret, missi legati ut Aesculapi signum Romam ab Epidauro transferrent, anguem, qui se in navem eorum contulerat, in quo ipsum numen esse constabat, deportaverunt; … "when the state was troubled with a pestilence, the envoys dispatched to bring over the image of Aesculapius from Epidaurus to Rome fetched away a serpent, which had crawled into their ship and in which it was generally believed that the god himself was present."* (Translation by Foster) Cp. Livy 10.47.6–7. The transfer is discussed by Ando 2008, 25–6 and 41–2.

30 Richardson 1992, 242; LTUR 3:206–8, s.v. Magna Mater, aedes (Pensabene). Livy (29.10.4–11) describes a stone, while Ovid uses the term *imago*, which is more suggestive of an anthropomorphic statue (Beard, North, and Price 1998, 2.44). On the re-use of the stone as the face of a statue see Arn. *Adv. nat.* 7.49.

31 Martin 1987, 54–143.

32 Plut. *Marc.* 21; Livy 25.40.1–3.

33 Polyb. 31.30.9.

34 Beard, North, and Price 1998, 5 and 11–2; cp. Potts 2015, 82.

35 Martin 1987, 15; Livy 1.56.1.

36 Ov. *Fast.* 2.639–85; Richardson 1992, 379–80; LTUR 5: 27–8, s.v. Terminus, fanum, sacellum, ara (Tagliamonte); Woodard (2006, 59–95) compares the stone and the rites surrounding it to the aniconic shiva linga idols of India.

37 Ov. *Fast.* 6.295–300; Plin. *HN* 7.45; Turcan 1988, 3–4; Vermeule 1987, 66–7, fig. 36. LIMC 5:412 and 418–9 s.v. Hestia/Vesta (Fischer-Hansen, 1990).

38 Martin (1987, 31–6) believes this statue to have been the same as the Hercules Fictilis, though it is more usually thought to have been a second statue that stood in the vicinity of the Ara Maxima (e.g. Richardson 1992, 188). Cp. Plin. *HN* 34.33.

39 Plin. *HN* 34.34. Martin (1987, 37–45) argues that the Janus was an old statue taken from Falerii in 241 BC by A. Manlius Torquatus that was later consecrated in a temple of Janus in the Forum Transitorium of Domitian.

40 Prop. 4.2.59–64; Varro, *Ling.* 5.74. For a discussion of the god's origins and date of its importation to Rome see Marquis (1974, 493–6), who opposes the theory that the Etruscan god was brought to Rome by *evocatio* following the sack of Volsinii in 264 BC. Perhaps this later date should rather be associated with the transformation of the statue into a bronze. On the temple of Vertumnus see Richardson 1992, 433 and LTUR 5: 213–4, s.v. Vortumnus, aedes (Aronen).

41 Cp. Jenkyns 2013, 237–40.

42 Cp. Potts 2015 80: "It is not a simple step, however, to move from an anthropomorphic iconography of the divine to the reconstruction of idolatry."

43 Gaifmann 2012, 18–28.

44 Paus. 7.22.4 (Translation by W. H. S. Jones). Cp. Hdt.2.4.2 and 2.51–2 on the introduction of images of the gods by the Egyptians and the absence of images amongst the Persians.

45 Gaifman 2012, 77–131.

46 Gaifman 2012, 311.

47 On the Roman ritual of the vow see Derks 1998, 215–39.

48 Brunaux (1986, 70) states that the gods had no human form prior to the arrival of the Romans. Menéz (1999, 401) dismissed the possibility of divinities in Iron Age art, forcing him to arrive at the conclusion that the stone figures from Paule he was studying (see below) were ancestors. Even Rapin (2002, 223), who was well aware of recent discoveries in prehistoric sculpture, citing Diodorus Siculus' account of Brennus (see below), described the role of sculpture in Iron Age art as marginal. Cp. Woolf 2001b, 178.

49 Reinach 1892 and 1905, 146–56; Jullian 1924, 152–4; Déchelette 1914, 1509; Jacobsthal 1944, 161–2: "Early Celtic art is an art of ornament, masks and beasts, without the image of Man."

50 Reinach 1892 and 1905, 151–6; cp Jullian 1924, 153. The connection between Pythagoras and the druids, which is based on Amm. Marc. 15.9 and Clem. Al. *Strom.* 1.15, and a supposed shared belief in the transmigration of souls, has been torn down by De Vries 1961, 202.

51 Lewis 1966, 4.

52 von Petrikovits 1965, 196. My translation. "Erst als Gallien und die anderen keltisch beeinflußten Länder Teile des römischen Reiches wurden, und sich zivilatorisch und auch in ihrer Religionsausübung an Rom anglichen, wurden für zahlreiche große und

kleine Heiligtümer von römisch-griechischen Künstlern und Steinmetzen und deren einheimischen Schülern und Gesellen Bildnisse der einheimische Gottheiten geschaffen."

53 Tac. *Germ.* 9.3–9 (Translation by M. Hutton and E. H. Warmington).

54 Caes. *B. Gall.* 6.21.1 (Translation by S. Handford).

55 A tradition that goes back to Ortellius (1596) and Flouest (1884, 287).

56 Diod. Sic. 22.9.4 (Translation by F. Walton).

57 Caes. *B. Gall.* 6.17.1 (Translation by S. Handford).

58 Luc. 3.411–413 (Translation by J. Duff).

59 Tommassi Moreschini 2005, 144–6; Dyson (1970) compares the scene to the destruction of shrine near Tour de Vésone (Dordogne) by Q. Servilius Caepio in 106 BC (Strabo 4.1.13), and to the destruction of the sacred grove of the druids on the Island of Mona by Suetonius Paullinus in Wales in AD 60 (Tac. *Ann.* 14.30).

60 Tac. *Germ.* 9.1: *pars Sueborum et Isidi sacrificat: unde causa et origo peregrino sacro, parum comperi, nisi quod signum ipsum in modum liburnae figuratum docet advectam religionem.*

61 Thus Rives 1999, 162. Haase (2001), on the other hand, argues for the opposite interpretation – that the cult was indeed that of Egyptian Isis, imported to free Germany in the first century AD from the Roman Empire.

62 Tac. *Germ.* 40.5: *arcanus hinc terror sanctaque ignorantia, quid sit illud, quod tantum perituri vident* (Translation by Rives). For a full commentary on Nerthus see Rives 1999, 292–4. The RGA2 *s.v. Idole* 15.325–30, (Capelle, 2000**)** similarly interprets Nerthus as an idol. Jenkyns (2013, 248), maintains that the cult lacked an image or idol save the chariot and robe of the goddess.

63 Gell 1998, 109–16 and 143–5. The taboo surrounding the Nerthus idol is strikingly similar to wrapping and unwrapping of the Tahitian To'o idols described by nineteenth century travelers, or the modern day secrecy involved in the renewal ritual of the idol of Jagganath in the Temple or Puri in India. In both cases, exposure to the divine substance in the idols is dangerous and requires extensive precautions and rites of purification.

64 Polyb. 2.32.6.

65 Caes. *B Gall.* 7.2.: " . . . *ut iure iurando ac fide sanciatur petunt collatis militaribus signis, quo more eorum gravissima caerimonia continetur* . . . "

66 Tac. *Germ.* 7.2–3: (penalties ordered by priests are not seen as punishments) *sed velut deo imperante, quem adesse bellantibus credunt. effigiesque et signa quaedam detracta lucis in proelium ferunt.* Interestingly translated by Hutton and Warmington in 1970 as "certain totems also and emblems."

67 Tac. *Hist.* 4.22.2: " . . . *inde depromptae silvis lucisque ferarum imagines, ut cuique genti inire proelium mos est, mixta belli civilis externique facie obstupefecerant obsessos.*"

68 On the complex question of the divinity of Roman standards and their storage in sanctuaries see Töpfer 2012, 179–98.

69 Bethu Phátraic 1.90 = Zwicker 143.32–44.15 (written AD 895–900).

70 For a summary see Simek (2003,103–8), who is particularly skeptical of the reliability of later Christian and Christian-influenced texts. Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum* 4.26 = Clemens 71.27–42; Ibn Fadlan: Montgomery 2000, 10–11. The Saga of Ragnar Lodbrokar 20 (Van Dyke 2003, 76–7) describes travelers finding an old tree-like idol some 40 feet high on the island of Samsø. The idol narrates how it once received sacrifices.

71 Déchelette 1914, 1509; Macculloch (1918, 333) suggests Caesar referred to border stones. Flouest (1884, 285–6) writes of a universal repugnance amongst the Celts to depict the gods in anthropomorphic form, and suggests Caesar referred to fetishes consisting of natural objects such as tree stumps and stones.

72 Reinach 1905, I.146–148. The connection to menhirs was picked up by modern commentators on the Gallic War, such as Holmes 1911, 31–2 and 1914, 246 and Dittenberger and Meusel 1965, 168. Duval (1957, 13–17) seems to concur with Reinach, but goes on to recognize the existence of primitive images.

73 Espérandieu 4.3030; Immerzeel 1988 (fig. 1 is reproduced here); CAG 29.232:151 (1989, Galliou); Éveillard 2003.

74 Rives 1999, 16–17.

75 It is possible that Tacitus' father or uncle was the financial procurator of Gallia Belgica (Plin. *HN* 7.76) and that he himself commanded one of the Rhine legions following his praetorship in 88 (Rives 1999, 42). For a discussion of the nature and reliability of the *Germania* as a whole see Rives 1999, 48–65.

76 Bowie 2006, 12–15; Tylor 1871, esp. 2.99–167; Comte 1903, 3–9.

77 Krebs 2012.

78 Citron 2008, 32–6. Lippisches Landesmuseum Detmold 2009.

79 Holmes 1914, 264.

80 Hatt 1966, 11–12.

81 Zürn 1964a and 1964b; Kimmig 1987, 264–6, figs. 14–16; Frey 2002, 209–10; Baitinger and Pinkser 2002, 317, cat. no. 130, figs. 191 and 192 (catalogue entry by Baitinger); Duceppe-Lamare 2002, no. 09 D. The statue is now in the Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart, Inv. N. V 64,9.

82 The fragmentary sandstone head from Heidelberg was found in 1893 in the vicinity of Roman burials, and was initially thought to be Roman in date. It is now in the Badisches Landesmuseum in Karlsruhe (Kimmig 1987, 278–79, no. 10, fig. 26, Duceppe-Lamare 2002, 298, no. 07D). The find circumstances of the figure from Holzgerlingen are much less clear, having been found either in 1838 or 1848. It is now in the Württembergisches Landesmuseum in Stuttgart (Frey 2002, 211, fig. 199; Baitinger and Pinsker 2002, cat. no. 134, fig. 199).

83 Duceppe-Lamarre 2002, 298–318. Her actual total of 204 stone sculptures includes a group of Iron Age Iberian statues of Spain and Portugal, (48 sculptures), as well as examples from the eastern Danube (seven sculptures). Mr. Wolfram Ney of the University of Mainz has since catalogued some 178 Iron Age sculptures from France and Germany west of the Rhine alone in his recent Magisterarbeit (personal communication, May 2nd 2014).

84 Frey and Herrmann 1997, 474–85, figs. 15–21; Herrmann 2002, 106–7, figs. 70 and 71; Baitinger and Pinsker 2002, 262-cat. no. 3.1 (catalogue entry by F. R. Herrmann); Duceppe-Lamarre 2002, cat.no. 06D. The statue fragments are: Baitinger and Pinkser 2002, 262–3, figs. 259–262, cat nos. 3.2–4 (catalogue entry by F. R. Herrmann). All three of are of sandstone of slightly different colours (red, white, and brown) than the intact statue.

85 Herrmann 2002, 95–8.

86 On the burial and its contents see Frey 2002b; Baitinger and Pinkser 2002, 242–56, no. 1 (figs. 233–250). On the form of the armor Rapin 2002. The small bronze attachment on the Schnabelkanne see Baitinger and Pinkser 2002, 242–5, no. 1.1, figs. 233–235; Py 2011, 101; Armit 2012, 133, fig. 5.9.

87 Kaiser 2010; Fröhlich 2006. The form of the hat has often been associated with mistletoe leaves and hence druids, but the comparison seems to me to be forced. In German literature it is described as a "*Blattkrone*." On Holzgerlinen statue: Kimmig 1987, 279–81, no. 11, fig. 27. On the Heidelberg head: Kimmig 1987, 278–9, no. 10, fig. 26.

88 Frey and Herrmann 1997, 485.

89 Chaume, Olivier, and Reinhard 2000; Chaume and Reinhard 2011; Frey 2002, 209–10.

90 Duceppe-Lamare 2002, 312, nos. 176 and 177F.

91 Chaume, Olivier, and Reinhard 2000, 239, fig. 14.

92 Frey 2002, 209; Raßhofer 1998, 25–9.

93 Duceppe-Lamarre 2002, 290–1; Py 2011, 55–81 and 181–92.

94 For a relatively recent discussion of Celtic sculpture in the south of France in English see Armit 2012. Py (2011) provides a superb and more up to date overview of sculpture in the region in French. It should also be noted that older literature routinely describes these southern French sculpture as a product of Celto-Ligurian society. This ethnic identification, based on textual descriptions of interactions between Celts and Ligurians, is no longer current since archaeologically there seems to be no obviously distinction between these two ethnic groups (Armit 2012, 76; Williams 2001).

95 Py 2011, 83–102; Boissinot 2013.

96 Duceppe-Lamarre 2002, nos. 168F and 169 F. Now in the Musée de la Vieille Charité, Marseille, nos. 8270 and 8271.

97 Duceppe-Lamarre 2002, nos.117–19 F. Now in the Dépot de l'Hôtel de Sade at St-Rémy de Provence. Inv. no. 4245, discovered in in 1950, consists of the legs only and was re-used in late antique wall. Find nos. 6976a–b – found in 1967, re-used in path, and include the penis. On the heroon and stratigraphy: Roth Congès 2004, no. 7020; Py 2011, 103–9.

98 Barbet 1991, fig. 15; Roth Congès 2004; Py 2011, 107. The discovery corresponds to the site's feature XLVb.

99 Roth Congès 2004, 28.

100 Py 2011, 131–52. A full catalogue of the sculpture from Entremont can be found in Salviat 1987.

101 Py 2011, 153–64.

102 On Iron Age head hunting see Armit 2012; Py 2011, 163.

103 Arcelin and Rapin 2003, 204–5; cp. Py 2011, 105–9.

104 The fragmentary warrior statue found in 1901 at Nîmes (Grézan), and another warrior torso, possibly depicting an archer that was found re-used in a wall at Lattes, can both be dated from the late seventh to mid-sixth centuries BC based on armor and belt buckles (Arcelin and Rapin, 2003, 200–1, fig. 24 19, Py 2011, 55–82). A Janus-headed figure from oppidum of Marduel (S-Bonnet-du-Gard), is dated stratigraphically to the mid-sixth century BC (Armit 2012, 79, Py 2011, 23–9).

105 For a discussion of the chronology of Iron Age sculpture in southern France, see Rapin 2002; Garcia 2004, 111–15 and Baitinger and Pinsker 2002, 321–4, cat. no. 140 (B. Lescure); Boissinot 2013.

106 Benôit 1969; for a critical discussion of Greek influence see Armit 2012, 76–80.

107 Dietler 1997.

108 Ménez 1999; CAG 22.163:196–8 (2002, P. Gaillou); Brun and Ruby 2008, 100–1; Duceppe-Lamare 2002, cat. nos. 161–4F.

109 Ménez 1999, 403–5.

110 Ménez 1999, 397, fig. 42.4; Now in the Musée Fenaille à Rodez. The findspot is La Devèse d'Ayrebesque, Commune Bozouls (Aveyron).

111 Ménez 1999, 395, fig. 43.5. Musée de Guéret.

112 Ménez 1999, 398, fig.43, 7; Py 2011, 192–4 (illus.). Duceppe-Lamare 2002, cat. no. 138F. Musée archéologique de Nîmes inv. no. 961.30.1.

113 Petit and Wahlen 2005.

114 Blanchet 1930, 19. Excavations undertaken some years later found nothing, though the exact findspot could not be located after so much time. Duval (1989, 126): "Cette sculpture représente sans doute une divinité."; Duceppe-Lamare 2002, cat. no. 115F; Müller 2009, 148, fig. 192. It is now in the Musée des Antiquités Nationale, St-Germain-en-Laye, Inv. Nr. 78243.

115 Duval 1989, 126.

116 Baitinger and Pinkser 2002, 242, cat. no. 1.1, figs. 99, and 233–236 (catalogue entry by Herrmann).

117 Villefosse 1913; Lantier 1934; Deyts 1992, 14 (illus.); Guillaumet 2003, 173, no. 1.3, fig. 3. CAG 91.095.3★:113–4, fig. 45 and cover illustration (Woimant, 1995). The statue remained unknown to the archaeological community until it was shown to Héron de Villefosse in 1911 while in the possession of the Marquis d'Argentré (Villefosse 1913). It was finally acquired by the Musée des Antiquites Nationales in St-Germain-en-Laye from the marquis' heirs in 1933 and remains there to this day (inv. no. 76551). The God from Bouray has appeared regularly in exhibitions and books on Celtic world, e.g. Müller 2009, 149, fig. 195.

118 Guillaumet (2003, 173) interprets the hooves as shoed feet.

119 On the site and statue see CAG 60.588:427–8 and back cover illustration (Woimant, 1995); Blanchet 1989, 237–9 and Woimant 1989. The statue is now in the Musée Departmental de l'Oise, Beauvais, inv. no. 85/16. It too has become a show piece of Iron Age art, e.g. Müller 2009, 150, fig. 197, Derks 1998, 48, fig. 2.5.

120 Hunter 2006, 102–4, picked up by Müller 2009, 137. Literature on the Gundestrup Cauldron is extensive. Recent studies include Olmsted (1979) and Pittioni (1984), both arguing for Gallic origins, and Bergquist and Taylor (1987) arguing for Thracian production. More recently, Falkenstein (2004) has suggested that the cauldron was produced by Thracian craftsmen for Gallic masters. In spite of the controversies, the Gundestrup Cauldron continues, probably quite rightly, to be used as a major source of information for Celtic religion, e.g. Green 1986, 25–6. It is now in the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen.

121 E.g. Deyts 1992, 7 and Nerzic 1989, 48. Ross (1986, 117–19) argued briefly against the aniconic theory by suggesting that wooden images of the gods must have been very abundant in the pre-Roman period, basing her argument largely on the finds at Fontes Sequanae. Though I agree that Ross is correct, the wooden sculptures from Fontes Sequanae are all Roman in date (see Chapter 3).

122 For an overview of the Holzidole see RGA^2 15 *s.v. Idole und Idolatrie*, 15.325–9 (Capelle, 2000); Capelle 1996 and 2002. Also useful are the discussions in Dietrich 2000, 188–98, and Behm-Blancke 2002–2003, 1.89–98. In English, and on British and Irish figures see Coles 1990 and 1998.

123 The most comprehensive report on the Braak figures is Dietrich 2000. Since being found, the figures have since shrunk significantly (Dietrich 2000, 162).

124 Interpreted as a "burnt-mound" a site type best known from Scotland. Dietrich 2000, 203–9.

125 Dietrich 2000, 177–9.

126 The final report on the site (Behm-Blancke 2002–2003) was published based on manuscript of its then deceased excavator Günter Behm-Blancke (1912–1994). While it is clear that the editors of the material have done their utmost, much has surely been lost in the passage of time. Not one of the wooden figures, or any of the other wooden objects from the site, seems to have been the subject of radiocarbon or dendrochronological dating.

127 Capelle 2002, 84–86. Behm-Blancke 2002–2003, 1.22–69.

128 Behm-Blancke 2002–2003, 1.210–3, pl. 44.1–3; 2.202–6, pl.108.1–2, find complex SR1.

129 Capelle 1996, 35–6; Capelle 2002, 42 and 83–4, figs. 32 and 69.

130 Capelle 2002, 67, fig. 56. Mackeprang 1935, 248–9, pls. 4–7. The figure is now in the Danish National Museum in Copenhagen.

131 Seurre: Deyts 1983, 180–1, pl. 103.a; Bonenfant and Guillaumet 1998, 21–4, figs. 5 and 6. Now in the Musée Denon at Chalon-sur-Mer (Inv. No. 77.10.3). The fragmentary 55 cm tall sculpture depicts the legs and torso of a naked male figure with separately carved legs and a large erect phallus. It is usually thought to date to the Hallstatt period. Soulac-sur-Mer: Bonenfant and Guillaumet 1998, 67, fig. 38. Found in 1973 with sherds of the sixth to third centuries BC. The 86 cm high statue consists of a crude head, with a T-shaped nose and brow above a simple straight mouth, mounted on top of a large tapered peg. Its format and findspot are suggestive of an architectural sculpture, perhaps part of a ship or wharf.

132 Mottier 1993; Brunetti 2007, 510–11. Now in the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva, Inv. No. 00426.

133 Wyss 1979; Brunetti 2007, 510–11. The statue is now in Musée cantonal d'archéologie et d'histoire, Lausanne.

134 Brunetti 2007.

135 Wieland 1999, 41–2. The wooden sculptures are now in the Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart.

136 Planck 1982, 138–47 figs. 24–26; Reichenberger 1993, 392–5, figs. 18 and 19; Wieland 1999, 36–46, figs. 31–33.

137 Keefer 2005 and Keefer, Pfeifer-Schäller, and Sauerwein 2006.

138 Stone eyes can be found on a statue from Ballachulish (Scotland) (Capelle 2002, 19, 64, and 112, figs. 10, 54, and 91), and on a group of yew-wood warriors standing in a boat from Roos Carr (Britain), and dated by C14 to the late Bronze or early Iron Age, also have quartzite eyes (Capelle 1995, 22, fig. 22; 2002, 40, and 104, figs. 31 and 85).

139 Capelle 2002, 61. One of the figures from the Wittenmoor planked pathway shows a polished surface around its neck which has been attributed to rubbing from a cloth decoration (Capelle 2002, 61). The *Holzidol* with ring from Oberdorla is from sanctuary 1.3, dating to the early imperial period (Behm-Blancke 2002–2003: 1. pl. 9.1–2 and 2.111, pl. 57.5–6). On painted statues, see Capelle 2002, 62–5. Tacitus (*Germ.* 6.6) mentions painted wooden shields amongst the Germans, and a painted shield was found in the enormous deposit of weapons at Nydam (Capelle 2002, 64, fig. 55). Herbord of Bamberg's twelfth century description of a Slavic temple in Stetin also mentions painted sculptures (Capelle 2002, 64–5).

140 Trichtingen: Hoppe and Gebhard 2012; Saint-Louis: Furger 2015. Both sites discussed by Müller 2002, 162–4, fig. 113.

141 Müller 2002, 164, fig. 113. Göbel, Hartmann, Joachim and Zedelius 1991.

142 Coles 1998; Capelle 2002, 107–11.

143 Frey 2002, 212–13; Baitinger and Pinsker 2002, 30–2. For a recent discussion of supposed Greek influence in English see Armit 2012, 76–80.

144 Steuernagel 2002; Chaume, Olivier, and Reinhard 2000, 240–1; Kimmig (1987) argued for a connection to an Italic tradition of grave stele. Beeser (1983) and Eibner (1982) even went so far as to propose that the Warrior of Hirschlanden was a re-carved kouros, but this argument seems extremely unlikely given the use of a native limestone instead of marble.

145 A fact that was understood even before the re-dating of the sculptures of southern France (Nerzic 1989, 26–8).

146 One rare exception is Armit's (2012, 103–6) comparison (in the context of head-hunting)

of lintels with heads, and skull niches, from the southern French Iron Age sculpture with early Roman wooden heads found at Fontes Sequanae.

147 Frey 2002, 211.

148 On torcs in ritual deposits across western Europe see Müller 2002, 162–8. In addition to Neiderizer, Saint-Louis, and Ribemont-sur-Ancre, Müller includes the hoards found at Snettisham, (Norfolk) in this discussion. The 14 hoards buried separately at Snettisham over a period of some decades in the first century BC contained 75 complete torcs along with the fragments of 100 others as well as other pieces of scrap metal. The finds have been variously interpreted as the remains of a great Celtic royal treasury, as the deposits of valuables by metal workers, and most recently as ritual offerings. The discovery of an enclosure wall around the area containing all of the hoards seems to strengthen the latter interpretation. For a discussion see Stead 1990 and 2014; Fitzpatrick 1992; Bradley 2017, 38–40.

149 For an extensive study of torcs and their symbolism see Adler 2003 and Brunetti 2007, 515–16. See also Green 1992, 211–12, and Johns 1996, 27–9.

150 On beaded torcs see Hunter 2008, 132–4. On Regina's tombstone see RIB 1065, Carroll 2012, and Allason-Jones 1989, 24 (fig. 6) and 122. Allason-Jones suggests that in the Roman period torcs were reduced to the status of a "good luck" symbol.

151 Fontjin 2010, 14–15; Fischer 1979.

152 Goudineau 1998; de Saint-Symphorien 1998; Ménez 1999, 400–5.

153 See pp. 93–94 and 155.

154 Roymanns 1990; Bradley 1990, 188–9.

CHAPTER 3

1 These works include all manner of cult images, from sculptures in the round to reliefs, altars, and votive monuments, but they also record funerary art and architectural decoration that are not relevant to this book.

2 For a discussion of the varying quality of Roman provincial sculpture, using Roman Britain as a case study, see Stewart 2010.

3 On the problem of the aesthetics of ancient art and style see Scott 2006 and 2010.

4 The term is taken from a section Tacitus (Germania 43) in which a god known as Alci is equated with Castor and Pollux. On the process more generally see Rives 2007, 142–48, Häussler 2008 and 2012, and Ando 2008, 43–58.

5 Häussler 2008, 14–15.

6 Thus for example Rives (2007, 146): "In many areas, notably parts of Syria, North Africa and western Europe, it had not been traditional to represent the gods in human form at all; with the spread of Graeco-Roman culture, anthropomorphic images were gradually adopted almost everywhere." See also discussion below.

7 This debate has, for the most part, been the concern of British scholarship, having first been considered by Haverfield in 1905. Amongst the more important recent contributions are Millett 1990; Woolf 1998; Scott and Webster 2003; Mattingly 2004; Scott 2006 and 2010; Revell 2009.

8 A good summary of the various mechanisms currently proposed for Romanization can be found in Curchin 2004, 1–22. Willing adoption: Woolf 1998 and Millett 1990; Acculturation and Creolization: Webster 1997 and 2001. Mattingly (2004) has argued for the existence of discrepant identities amongst the inhabitants of the provinces with no uniformity.

9 Woolf 1998, 215–37; 2003a, 148–9; 2003b; Van Andringa 2003; Rives 2007, 142–8.

10 On the process of *interpretatio* and provincial art see Hatt 1970, 244–302; Henig 1984, 36–67; King 1990, 139–42; Green 1986; 36–8; Häussler 2012. On religion as resistance to Roman rule see: Momigliano 1987; Webster 1997; Webster 2001; Aldhouse-Green 2003. MacMullan (1965) viewed the late appearance of native divinity names and images in Romano-Celtic art as part of a "Celtic renaissance" in which individuals living in Gaul and Germany had become wealthy enough to express their own native identities by honoring the gods they had always preferred.

11 Spickermann 1997, 151. Cp. Cancik and Rüpke 1997 and Häussler 2008.

12 Woolf 2001b, 178.

13 Woolf 2003b, 136–7.

14 Webster 2003 and Aldhouse-Green 2004, 25–6; also discussed by Stewart 2010, 15–16. The idea of resistance in provincial style

opposed by Johns (2003a and 2003b) who points out that the use of style in this sense is a modern conception. I am not entirely certain of this, since Roman historical relief and imperial portraiture routinely and intentionally adopted specific styles to convey particular ideas (Hölscher 2004), but her point about competence of provincial sculptors is very valid.

15 Webster 1995 and 1997; Hingley 2005, 40–1; Hingley 2010, 57–64.

16 Gaifman 2012, 131–80.

17 Birge 1994.

18 On the Ficus Ruminalis: Hunt 2016, 100–20; LTUR 2: 249 s.v. ficus ruminalis (Coarelli); Richardson 1992, 151; and on the Grove of Dea Dia and the Arval Brethren see: Scheid 1990 and Hunt 2016, 137–40, and 163–5.

19 On the complicated nature of sacred trees in the Roman world see Hunt 2016 and Scheid 1993 (on sacred woods).

20 Marsille 1939; Éveillard 2011, 110–12, fig. 11; Daire 2005, 119. Ménez (1999, 394) thought that the sculpture, though similar, was not in fact a *buste-socle*. Certainly the base is a more regular square than other examples, and there is no representation of the chest below the neck. The statue is now in the Musée de Vannes, inv. no. 356. Both objects were ploughed up by a tractor at the same spot in 1937 and are composed of the same local granite. Since no follow-up excavation took place, it is not impossible that the close association of the two is mere chance.

21 Espérandieu 4.3030; CAG 29.232: 151 (1989, Galliou); Immerzeel 1988; Éveillard 2003.

22 Immerzeel (1988, 21) suggests the fifth or fourth century B.C.

23 Éveillard 2003, 124–6. Immerzeel 1988, 21–3.

24 Gödel 1987, 52–7; Glaser 2000, 45–6.

25 Toutain 1920, 305.

26 Boutet de Monvel 1863, 139.

27 Boutet de Monvel 1863, 138–40, pl. 5; Quicherat 1864, 198–200; Koethe 1932; Grenier 1960, 733–7, fig. 222. CAG 45.111:158 (1988, Provost). The plans of both Koethe and Grenier are simplified versions of that of Boutet de Monvel, which is adapted here. The initial report of Boutet de Monvel describes a "trilithe," with two stones supporting a third in a post and lintel type arrangement, sloped toward the east, and with burnt marks from the fires of shepherds, suggesting a shelter. Koete and Grenier, however, describe a single stone broken in three pieces, but cannot have seen the monument, which was destroyed by 1864. No dimensions of the prehistoric monument are given, though the stone is contained in a cella with an interior of roughly 3.2 × 3.2 m, and measures 4.5 × 2.5 m in the earliest illustration. The main publications of the site all agree that the stone or stones were brown-red sandstone that was not natural to the area, but had been brought from a source at least 60 km distant. Since the monument was visible above the ground when the cella walls were not, and had obtained a local name, it must have been quite large.

28 Gomez de Soto and Lejars 2009, 230–1, fig. 3. An example of non-cult re-use can be found in the case of an Iron Age stele from Châtillon-sur-Colmont (Mayenne) that was cut down and inscribed as a Roman milestone in the reign of Aurelian, in either AD 274 or 275, suggesting that by this point it had lost all its religious value. Whether it had any such value in the previous three centuries, or had simply lain unused since the prehistoric period, is open to debate. See Naveau 1982. The so-called "sanctuaire dolmenique" excavated at Mont Aussois, Alésia, (Côtes d'Or) in 1912, was once cited as a parallel to the temple at Triguères, but can now be said with certainty to be nothing more than a Roman oven that was constructed with large slabs of stone, after a second comparable oven was excavated by Espérandieu at Alésia in 1938 (Toutain 1918, 49 and 1920, 362; Espérandieu 1939).

29 Birge 1994.

30 Excavated from 1836 to 1842, 1926, 1932–39, 1948–53 and finally in 1963, the extent of our knowledge of this important site is frustratingly limited (Reddé 2011, 356). The wooden and stone sculptures, on the other hand, have been well published: Deyts 1966, 1983, and 1994; Romeuf 1986; Aldhouse-Green 1999. CAG 21/3.551:120–36 (2009, Deyts, Provost, and Mangin); Espérandieu 3:314–34, nos. 2403–49 and 11:21–6 nos. 7676–8.

31 Deyts 1994; Aldhouse-Green 1999; Kiernan 2012, 96–100; Zerres 2017.

32 Sauer 2005.

33 Deyts 1984, pl. 6.16 and 49.

34 Chamellières: Romeuf 1986; Romeuf and Dumontet 2001; Essarois: Espérandieu 4.3412 (both statues); Deyts 1983, 190, pl. 92 a and c;

CAG 21/2.250:315–6 (Provost, 2009), now in the Musée Archéologique in Dijon. Luxeuil-les-Baines: Espérandieu 7.5347 (eight sculptures) and 10.7286 (bust with a torc); Deyts 1983, 185–8, pls. 89b, 92b, 108, 99b, and 90a and f. Now in the Musée Besançon. Montbouy: Espérandieu 4.2970 (a herm, three heads and anatomical votives), Grenier 1960, 731–2; Deyts 1983, 191–2; Capelle 1996, 25–6, fig. 21. Now in the Musée d'Histoire et d'Archéologie, Orléans. Bourbonne-les-Bains: Sauer 2005; Deyts 1983, 188–9; Source de la Douix is currently being studied by Katie Erdmann.

35 Musée d'Histoire et d'Archéologie, Orléans, Inv. Nos. A6212, A6214 and A6215. Cp. Deyts 1983, 192, pls. 95b and109a and b. Further bibliography on the site in the previous footnote.

36 Plin. HN 12.5; Hunt 2016, 261.

37 Aldhouse-Green 1999, 9.

38 Aldhouse-Green 1999,9. Deyts (1983, 203) suggested that the level of sophistication of the Chamalières wooden sculpture was much higher than those from Fontes Sequanae, and thus indicative of a later date.

39 Bürgi 1978; Belz et al. 2008. Brem, Leuzinger, and.Schweichel 2012. Now in the Museum für Archäologie Thurgau, Frauenfeld, Inv. Nr. 1977.014.1.45.

40 Aldhouse-Green 1999, 152, pl. 28; Romeuf 1986, 81, fig. 11.58; Adler 2003. See Chapter 2.

41 Sauer 2005, 8, fig. 6. Deyts 1983, 188–9.

42 Reddé 2011, 1.311–20, fig. 3.33; 2.356–8, fig. 3.68.

43 Drawn shortly after it was found, the statuette was lost in the nineteenth century. Incredibly, the statuette was re-discovered in 2005 in a cardboard box, wrapped in a newspaper from 1885. This re-discovery has allowed for a photographic publication of the statuette, which essentially confirms the accuracy of the nineteenth century drawing. Charbonnier, Perrier, and Crozier 2006; CAG 42.254:217 fig. 157 (1997, Lavendhomme); Petiot 1993; and Guillaumet (2003, 179, no. 1.16) who incorrectly gives a height of 14.5 cm based on the 1872 drawing, which was likely reduced to fit the journal's format, if indeed it was even a 1:1 illustration. The most recently published photo with a scale suggests a height of around 20 cm, though the object has probably shrunk since it was originally found.

44 I am informed by Christophe Mathevot that the statuette will soon be dated by dendrochronology (pers. comm. 4.17.14). It is now in the possession of La Diana: Société Historique et Archéologique du Forez, Montbrison.

45 Baudry and Ballereau 1873, 171–81 and 316–31. See also Chapter 6, Figs. 5.8 and 5.9.

46 Espérandieu 2.1716; LIMC 5:989, no. 83, s.v. Epona (Boucher, 1990). Now in the Musée Archéologique in Saintes, Inv. No. 49530.

47 Driard and Deyts 2013. The sculpture is now in the possession of the Musées de Sens, Inv. No. D.2009.2.1.

48 Driared and Deyts 2013, 442.

49 Fuchs 1969, 22–4.

50 Driard and Deyts 2013, 437.

51 Krüger 1944/50, an identification that Kortüm (1995, 202–3) agreed with.

52 Kemkes 2005, 200 (illus.) is more skeptical of the identification. Dauber 1945/50, pl. 31–2; Krüger 1945/50; Deyts 1983, 181, pl. 99; Kortüm 1995, 202–3, 206, no. 1 pl. 47 and 116.26. So far as I am aware, no scientific dating technique has ever been applied to the statue or to other wooden objects from the well.

53 On Veiovis: Livy 35.41.8, Ov. *Fast.* 3,437–48 (description) and Plin. *HN* 16.216 for its destruction in 80. Martin (1987, 24–5, fig. 1a–b) suggests a headless marble Jupiter found in the excavation of the Temple of Veiovis of Flavian date was likely the wooden statue's marble replacement. On the Apollo of Sosius: Plin. *HN* 13.53.36.28. Vitr. *De arch.* 10.2.13. It is unclear whether this latter statue was the temple's idol or simply a votive offering, since Vitruvius describes the same temple as containing the base for a colossus. Martin (1987, 24) argues that the passage in Vitruvius refers to an unrelated base in Ephesos.

54 CIL 13,3026; Esperandieu 4.3132–5; Grenier 1960, 695–700; Duval 1956, CAG 75.760–1*:445–2, figs. 333–338 (1995, Busson); Lavagne 1984; Adam 1984; Deyts 1992, 146–9; Deyts 1998, 38–40; Lavagne 1998 and Scherer 2013. The reconstruction of the monument is not without controversy. Bauchhenß (Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 38) saw the different carving styles employed on different blocks as indicative of multiple monuments, perhaps several Jupiter columns, each with a single base. The more conventional reconstruction views these differences

in carving style as a result of native and Roman stone carvers working on the same monument.

55 Lavagne 1984, 277–9. Scherrer (2013) argues that the *nautae Parisiaci* were native sailors who had participated in the Germanic campaigns of Tiberius and Germanicus in AD 16 and 17.

56 Mavilly: Grenier 1960, 685–95, figs. 204–207; Thévenot 1955; Espérandieu 3.2067. It has been proposed that a hexagonal shield held by Mars and Minerva in one panel is a representation of a late Iron Age shield, and that the monument thus dates to the late first century BC or early first century AD. This is certainly plausible, though hexagonal shields could easily have been used by Roman auxiliary troops long after the conquest, and appear in miniature form in a number of Roman context (Kiernan 2009, 78–87). Nijmegen: Roymans 2004, 214–16, fig. 9.2; Panhuysen 2002. One panel depicts a togate figure being crowned by a Victory while pouring a libation onto an altar inscribed TIBR CSAR, which has led to the hypothesis that the monument was connected to the triumph of Germanicus in AD 17. The three complete panels depict Apollo, Diana, and Ceres, while the fragmentary panels above and below probably represented divinities as well.

57 Blin 2000, 104–14, figs. 12 and 13. See also Chapter 4.

58 On Cernunnos in general: Deyts 1992, 35–45; Green 1992, 59–61; Thevenot 1968, 144–52; LIMC 4:839–44, s.v. Cernunnos (Blázquez, 1988). On the meaning of the name and its possible variations see Jufer and Luigenbühl 2001, 12. For a skeptical approach to Cernunnos see Altjohann 2003.

59 Espérandieu 4.3133; LIMC 4:840, no. 7, s.v. Cernunnos (Blázquez, 1988).

60 LIMC 4:840, no. 13, s.v. Cernunnos (Blázquez, 1988); Espérandieu 5.3653; Lantier 1934, 49–50, fig. 16;.Altjohann 2003, 69, fig. 4; Now in the Musée Saint-Rémi, Reims, Inv. No. 978 20 189.

61 Baigl and Vernou 2001/2.

62 Guillaumet 2003, 177–8, nos. 1.11–13 (illus.); Coulon 1996, 133–1.

63 Guillaumet 2003, 177; Coulon 1996, 141–3 (illus.).

64 The inscription begins"AVG.E"; Guillaumet 2003, 177, no. 1.12, fig. 12; Coulon 1996, 133–4 (illus.).

65 Guillaumet 2003, 177–8, nos. 1.11–1.15, figs. 11–15; Coulon 1996, 133–45.

66 Literature on the Jupiter columns is extensive. Noelke (2007, 179–82) surveys developments since his and Bauchhenß' comprehensive study of the monuments in Germania Inferior and Superior (Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981). See also Green 1986, 61–6; Derks 1998, 215–39; Beard, North and Price 1998, 1:346–7; Woolf 2001; Spickermann 2003, 384–9; Blanchard 2015.

67 We will return to the topic of their deposition in Chapter 6.

68 The standard work on this important monument is Bauchhenß 1984. See also Éspérandieu 7.5887; Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 162–3, nos. 272–5, pl. 31.1; Spickermann 2003, 246–7; Blanchard 2015, 41–3. A reconstruction stands in front of the Römische-Germanische Zentralmuseum in Mainz, and at the Saalburg in Hessen.

69 *Samus et Severus Venicari f(ilii) sculpserunt* – "Samus and Severus sons of Venicarius sculpted (this monument)"

70 *I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / Q(uintus) Iulius Priscus et Q(uintus) Iulius Auctus*. The altar is decorated on the sides with relief images of sacrificial utensils. Éspérandieu 7.5888; CIL 13.11807, Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, no. 276.

71 Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 310–1, note 227.

72 Blanchard (2015, 44) proposes that the statue actually depicted Nero in the guise of Jupiter, seeing it as improbable that the god would appear on top of the column as well as in the reliefs below.

73 Ludwig and Noelke 2009. Now in the Kurpfälzisches Museum der Stadt Heidelberg, Inv. Nr. HD-Neu 2008/150.

74 See Chapter 6 on other secondary uses for the *Viergöttersteine*. Blanchard (2015, 47–9) has recently suggested that many of the *Viergöttersteine* were actually free-standing votive monuments, in part because a much larger number of the bases survive in comparison to capitol groups. While it may be that the typology of the Jupiter columns needs to be revisited, the ratio he cites is not surprising considering how easily the *Viergöttersteine* could be conveniently fitted into almost any post antique building.

75 Butterstadt: Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 110, no. 97, pl. 11.2. Formerly in the Historisches Museum der Stadt Hanau, destroyed 1945. Steinsfurt: Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 227,

no. 495, pl. 45.1. Now in the Badisches Landesmuseum Karlsruhe, Inv. No. 62/146.

76 Altar of Pergamon: Andreae 2001, 136–47. The Munich reliefs, formerly known as the Altar of Domitius Ahenobarbus, see Kleiner 1992, 49–51. Both with further bibliography.

77 On wheel symbolism in the Celtic world see Green 1986, 55–66. On miniature wheel votives see Kiernan 2009, 11–39.

78 Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 378–85.

79 On these earlier interpretations see Bauchenß and Noelke 1981, 391–406; Spickermann 2003, 384–9.

80 Woolf 2001, 126–7. Cp. Green 1986, 61–5.

81 Klumbach 1973, 15, pl. 10–1.

82 Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 32–4; Maximus of Tyre (Apol. 8,8) states that the Celts worshiped Jupiter in the form of a tree, while Valerius Flaccus (6.91) describes a Celtic tribe in Thrace, the Coralli, as possessing broken columns with an image of Jupiter (*quis signa . . . truncaeque, Iovis simulacra, columnae*).

83 Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 370 and 391.

84 Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 39–41; Kleiner 1992, 157–8, fig. 132. A column with Jupiter was erected on the Capitoline hill in 63 BC. (Cic. *Div.* 1.19–21; *Cat.* 3.20–1; Dio Cass. 37.34.3–4).

85 Spickermann 2003, 246 and 386; Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 34.

86 Spickermann 2003, 386. "*Die Iupitergigantensäule sind somit ein eigenständiges Produkt der gallo-römischen Provinzialreligion mit keltischen und römischen Elementen, ohne dass dieses sich scharf voneinander trennen lassen.*"

87 The thirteen examples that seem to date between Nero and the middle of the second century are listed by Spickermann 2003, 246–7, with most coming from Mainz itself.

88 Hunt 2016. See also above.

89 Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 472–7, no. 172 pl. 90.2–5.

90 Rüger 1987 on the significance of the theonyms. Lyon: CIL 13.1766 = EDCS-10500719; Carmona: CIL 02.05413 = EDCS-05600689.

91 Winchester: RIB 88 = EDCS-07800324; Castlesteads: RIB 1988 = EDCS-07900797. Another dedication from Binchester (RIB 1030 = EDCS-07801321) was made to the "*matribus ollototis sive transmarinis*" It is debatable whether the Celtic "*Ollototae*" which appears in three other inscriptions to the Matres at Binchester, is in equivalent of "*omnium gentium*" or "*transmarinis.*" For a discussion see Schmidt 1987, 147–8, no. 33.

92 Equivalency of the Celtic mother goddess with Roman Fortuna: Derks 1998, 119; Deyts 1992, 60.

93 On the mother goddesses in general see Rüger 1987; Green 1986, 72–102 and 1989, 189–204; Schauerte 1987; Deyts 1992, 59–72; RE 14.2.2213–50 *s.v.* Matres (Matrae, Matronae), (Heichelheim, 1930); Roscher, *Lex* 2.2: 2464–79 (1897) s.v. *Matres, Matronae, Matrae;* Spickermann 2008, 61–77; LIMC 8:809–16, s.v. Matres, Matronae (1997, Bauchhenß).

94 Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, 131–2, no. 266 pl. 63; Gose 1972, 86–7, pl. 87 (findspot); pl. 128 (image); Espérandieu 7538. On the find circumstances see Chapter 4 and Fig. 4.23.

95 On Le Bernard see Baudry and Ballereau 1873; CAG 85.22:76–88 (Provost et al., 1996), see also Chapter 6, Fig. 6.9. On Mars Lenus mother goddess see Gose 1955, 32–3, fig. 25; Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, 198, no. 387, pl. 101; Trier Inv. Nr. S.T. 9760 and see Chapter 4, Fig. 4.14.

96 Green 1989, 189–204, with special reference to their triplism. Green 1992, 146–7 s.v. Maronae Aufaniae and 155–6 s.v. mother goddess.

97 Stuart and Bogaers 2001.

98 Rüger 1987, 3. A full catalogue of the monuments, sites, and inscriptions of the Ubian Matronae has yet to be compiled. For an overview of the literature to date see Biller 2010, 23–8. On the Matronae in general see Rüger 1987; Horn 1987; LIMC 8:808–16, s.v. Matronae (Bauchhenß, 1997); Spickermann 2008, esp. 61–77; Garman 2008 (to be used with caution); Biller 2010.

99 Spickermann 2008, 64 and appendix 2 (294–8) with a complete list of the theonyms of the Matronae.

100 Rüger 1987; Spickermann 2008, 65. Derks (1998, 128–30) connects the rise of the cult to Germanic mercenaries and the rise of a villa landscape, but sees the origins of the cult as development from the Matres of northern Italy and southern Gaul.

101 See Bauchhenß 2005 for a discussion of the peripheral decoration of Matronae altars.

102 LIMC 8:808–16, *s.v.* Matres, Matronae (Bauchhenß, 1997); Horn 1987, 45–9, pl. 6.3.

103 Altar of Vettius Severus: Espérandieu 11.7761; LIMC 8:809, no. 1, s.v. Matres, Matronae

(Bauchhenß, 1997); Rüger 1987, 10; Horn 1987, 38–9 pl. 2. Altar of Celsus: Espérandieu 11.7777; Horn 1987, 43, pl 6.2.

104 Spickermann 2008, 62; Rüger 1987, 10–12, and Horn 1987, 41–3.

105 Spickermann (2008, 62, note 202) summarizes the evidence for the earliest altars; cp. Derks 1998, 128–30 and Biller 2010, 266–71. The most important is an altar dedicated by a soldier in Jülich. The altar from Jülich was dedicated by a soldier of the Legio VI which was stationed in Trier from AD 70 to 120. CIL 13.7869 = ILS 4806 = EDCS-11100094 (from Jülich); Spickermann 2008, 62 no. 202.

106 Rüger 1987, 24.

107 Horn 1987, 49–53, pl. 13.2.

108 Spickermann 2008, 68–70, Biller 2010, 279.

109 Tac. *Germ.* 9.3–9. On trees and groves in Iron Age religion see Chapter 2; on statues of trees and representations of possible tree statues, for example on the Anaglypha Traiana, see Hunt 2016, 255.

110 Derks 1998, 126.

111 On Epona in general see RE 6.1228–43, *s.v.* Epona (1907, Keune); Fellendorf-Börner 1985; LIMC 5:985–99, *s.v.* Epona (Boucher, 1990); Deyts 1992, 51–7; Thevenot 1968, 185–91; Green 1992, 90–2; Häussler 2008, 28–9.

112 Trier Altbachtal Epona: Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, no. 60, pl. 16 LIMC 5:987, no. 42a (1990, Boucher); Espérandieu 11.7736. Landesmuseum Trier, Inv. No. ST 13,876.

113 Köngen: LIMC 5:993, no. 192, s.v. Epona (Boucher, 1990); Espérandieu, Germ. 586; Fellendorf-Börner 1985, no. 13, fig. 14 Now in the Landesmusuem Stuttgart, Inv. No. RL 416.

114 CIL I^2.253 = ILS 4917 = EDCS-37801936.

115 Apul. *Met.* 3.27; Juv. *Sat.* 8.155–7.

116 CIL 3.2903 = EDCS-10501897: *Augusto sacrum deae / Eponae / Connonius Icotasgi fil(ius) / templum cum suis orna/mentis omnibus de suo donavit l(ibens) m(erito).* "A dedication to Augustus and Epona, Connonius, the son of Icotasgi, gave a temple with all its ornaments from his own funds freely and deservedly." On horse statuettes from Chateaubleu Bontrond 1998.

117 If Pliny refers only those statues made recently in Rome, and if we may trust the numbers in the manuscripts, then a statue of Jupiter dedicated by Claudius in the Campus Martius that was some 30 cubits in height (ca. 13 m) was the baseline that Zenodorus had exceeded. A Tuscan Apollo, a bronze statue in the in the library of the Temple of Augustus, noted by Pliny as 50 Roman feet (ca. 15 m) in height, is another candidate, but presumably did not belong to Pliny's "*aetate nostra*." Nor did the largest statue to which he refers, the Hellenistic colossal statue of the sun at Rhodes, built by Chares the Lindian, and supposedly measuring 70 cubits, or roughly 31 m in height. Having proved himself with this work in Gaul, Pliny writes that Zenodorus was then called to Rome by Nero to build the colossal statue of the emperor that was later converted into a statue of the sun by the Flavians.

118 Deyts 1992, 116 (illus.); Woolf 1998, 215–16; Hofeneder 2008.

119 CIL 13.8709 (=EDCS-11100803): *Mercurio Arverno [a]ed(em) Irmidius Ma[c]ro ex i[usso].* Hofeneder 2008, 109 and 113, fig. 24.1; Hupe 1997, 162–3, no. 74, pl. 1.1–4; Deyts 1992, 116; LIMC 6:548, no. 489, *s.v.* Mercurius (Simon and Bauchhenß, 1992). Now in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, Inv. No. GL 414.

120 LIMC 6:537–5, s.v. Mercurius (Simon and Bauchhenß, 1992).

121 Caes. *B. Gall.* 6.17.1 (reproduced in Chapter 2). On Mercury in the western provinces see: Hupe 1997; Klein 2003, and Forster 2011 on Mercury in Raetia. Klein (2009) discussed mountain top sanctuaries in Germania Superior and Gallia Belgica, to which category the Puy du Dôme site surely belongs. Caesar's description of a Gallic Mercury as the inventor of all arts (Caes. *BGall.* 6.17. Cp. Min. Fel. *Oct.* 6.1), and as the Celtic god of commerce, has led to the postulation that Gallic Mercury was equated with the Celtic Lugus, who is known from later Irish texts as Lugh and who was similarly a patron of craftsmanship. See Nerzic 1989, 49; Green 1992, 135–6, s.v. Lugh and 148, s.v. "Mercury."

122 Duval 1957, 68–70; Nerzic 1989, 48–9, Espérandieu 1609; CIL 13.1514. The Celtic inscription reads "Apronios iuru sosi[n?] Esu[n?]." Now in the Musée des Antiquités Nationales in Saint-Germain-en-Laye.

123 Moitrieux 1992. Coin finds suggest the site was first founded in the early second century AD, and destroyed in the fourth, with the majority of the reliefs dating to the second and third centuries.

124 LIMC 2:511 and 514–7, nos. 24–50, s.v. Mars (1984, Simon and Bauchhenß) for other copies of the type.

125 Espérandieu, Germ., 213C; LIMC 2:559, no. 422, s.v. Ares/Mars (Simon and Bauchhenß 1984), Baatz 1973, 135–42, ORL A.10:80–8, fig. 10 (Fabricius, 1925) with older bibliography. Now in the Badische Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe, Inv. No. C 4870.

126 Oldenstein 1980. This observation settled a long debate about the dating of the statues, which ranged from the Flavian period to the third century AD.

127 Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, 91–3 no. 172; LIMC 2:560, no. 424, s.v. Ares/Mars (Simon and Bauchhenß 1984).

128 Hochscheid: Weisgerber 1975, 56–63 and 80, pls. 48–51, 54–5 and 74.1 and 51; Ghetta 2008, 307–9; Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, nos. 12–13, pl. 4–5 and no. 317, pl. 76.

129 Caes. *B. Gall.* 6.17.1.

130 On modern definitions of mystery and oriental cults, heavily influenced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century by Franz Cumont, see Beard, North, and Price 1998, 1:246–8. On the Roman mystery cults and their role in Roman religion see Beard, North, and Price 1998, 245–312; Turcan 1996; Alvar 2008. On the mystery cults in Roman Germany in particular see Schwertheim 1974 and Hensen 2013. The recent exhibition "Imperium der Götter" and its accompanying catalogue (Badisches Landesmuseum 2013) provides a colorful overview of the topic with special emphasis on western European monuments.

131 The major works on Roman Mithraism include Vermaseren 1963; Merkelbach 1984; Clauss 2001; Beck 2006. The standard corpus of Mithraic monuments remains Vermaseren 1956–60. Hensen (2013) provides a good new overview with a focus on recent discoveries in Germany and the Danube.

132 Clauss (2001, 55–6) discusses regional differences in the form of the tauroctony. On the difficulties of establishing Mithraic doctrine and its possibly fluid nature see Beck 2006, 16–64. On variations of practice, notably as evidenced by small finds see Martens and de Böe 2004.

133 On social networking see, for example, Allason-Jones (2004), discussion of Mithraism on Hadrian's wall. On Mithras as a personal intervenor in daily life of initiates see Clauss 2001, 141–4.

134 Clauss 2001, 308.

135 Examples of such foundation deposits have been excavated at Mundelsheim (Baden-Württemberg) where two pots with bones of a pig and chicken were buried near the tauroctony (Planck 1983, 180); at Carrawburgh (*Procolitia*, Hadrian's wall) a small cup and jug were buried with the skull of a bird in front of the altars before the tauroctony (Richmond and Gillam 1951, 38, fig. 8; Vermaseren 1956–60: 293–4, no. 844 and 296, no. 851.3), and at Tienen (Belgium), where a pit containing fragments of a sword and animal bones were found in a pit under the presumed location of the tauroctony. Other pits at Tienen have been described as commemorative of ritual events and meals that took place in or near the temple (Martens 2004).

136 Vermaseren 1956–60, 2:64–5 no. 1083 (with earlier bibliography). Archaeological Museum, Frankfurt-am-Main, Inv. No. 239.

137 Vermaseren 1982.

138 Lissi-Carrona 1986, pl. 7–14; Cp. Kristensen 2013b, 58, fig. 1.8. Now in the Museo Nazionale Romano Palazzo Massimo alle Terme (inv. no. 205837).

139 Hensen 2005, 219–20, figs. 261 and 262; Planck 1993, 291–9, figs. 137 and 138. A similar trick of the light was used by an altar depicting Sol found in the Carrawburgh Mithraeum (Vermaseren 1956–60, 2:294, nos. 846 and 847).

140 Huld-Zetsche 1986, 28, see also Chapter 4.

141 Cumont 1896–99 and Vermaseren 1956–60, and 1963. Beck (2006, 190–239) interprets the scene primarily in astrological terms, while reviewing older literature. A brief summary of recent theories can be found in Faraone (2013, 96–200), and a more extensive discussion in Alvar (2008, 74–106), with particular reference to the earlier approaches of Cumont and Vermaseren.

142 See Cumont 1902 and Vermaseren 1963. On the end of this approach see Alvar 2008, 95.

143 Ullansey 1991 and Beck 2006.

144 Gordon (2004, 260) speaks of tauroctonies in terms of narrative. Faraone (2013) has recently emphasized their relationship to Roman amulets.

145 Klöckner 2011, 214–16.

CHAPTER 4

1 Stambaugh 1978, 557.

2 Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.129: *In Capitolio, hoc est in terrestri domicilio Iovis*; Livy 5.21: *(Veientes ingnari) . . . alios (deos) votis ex urbe sua evocatos hostium templa novasque sedes spectare* . . . On Juno Regina See p. 33.

3 Tac. *Hist.* 5.9; Joseph. *AJ* 4.14.4.

4 Jenkyns (2013, 235–54) discusses the textual evidence (and lack thereof) for Roman encounters with idols.

5 Stambaugh 1978, 571; Schollmeyer 2008, 107–8; ancient sources for the statuary of the temple are Plin. *HN* 24.73, 77, 80, 89, and 90, 35.66, 131, 144; Dio 55.9.6 and 49.17.6.

6 Vermeule 1987, 73–4; LTUR 1: 319 s.v. Concordia, aedes (Ferroni); Richardson 1992, 98–9. The coins depict Concordia as a typical Hellenistic statue, enthroned holding a patera and scepter, but below her left arm is a small statue of Spes, which Cornelius Vermeule has interpreted as an archaistic statue. Was this Spes simply part of the main idol? A votive offering? An idol that had been removed from another temple? A subsidiary attribute that was displayed on different occasions? Or was the temple originally dedicated to Spes, who was supplanted by the more magnificent statue of Concordia? We simply have no information.

7 Jenkyns 2013, 236.

8 Vitr. 1.7.1; Stambaugh 1978, 560–1; Jenkyns 2013, 25–7.

9 Vitr. 4.5.1.

10 Vitr. 4.5.2.

11 Elsner 2007.

12 Boschung 2007, 68–73.

13 Rome, Temple Fortuna Huisce Diei: See Richardson 1992, 156; LTUR 3:269–70, s.v. Fortuna huiusce diei, aedes (Gros); Coarelli 1981, 19–20, pl. 22, cp. von Hesberg (2007, 453 fig. 6) who suggests the base is actually an altar foundation from an earlier structure. Temple of Hercules at Ostia: Rieger 2004, 225–33; Temple of Apollo, Pompeii: von Hesberg 2007, 451, fig. 4; Carroll and Godden (2000, fig. 1) who excavated trenches in the temple courtyard right up to the altar base, suggest that the temple may have been renovated in the first century BC or later. Temple of Dionysos (or Liber) at Sant' Abbondio, near Pompeii: Wolf 2007; Bielefeldt (2007, 354–5) believes that the idol or idols must have been smaller statuettes, with a table for offerings in front of them; van Andringa et al. 2013.

14 See von Hesberg 2007. Greek examples with mosaic floors in front of a cult image base include the temple of Athena in Assos (Asia Minor), and the Temple of Despoina at Lykosura (Greece), where a railing kept visitors away from a large statue base that filled the back half of the cella.

15 Von Hesberg 2007.

16 Apart from those discussed above, other temples with evidence for idol placement includes in Rome the base in the apse of the Temple of Mars Ultor (Richardson 1992, 160–2; LTUR 2:291 s.v. Forum Augustum (Kockel). Apses in other temples presumably contained the idols as well, such as the Temple of Venus Genetrix (Richardson 1992, 166–7; LTUR 2:300–2, s.v. Forum Iulium (Morselli), or the double apses of the temple of Venus and Roma (Richardson 1992, 409–11; LTUR 5: 121–3, s.v. Venus et Roma, aedes, templum (Cassatella). Non-podium style temples include the statues and bases of eastern and Egyptian divinities that were found in the highly unusual temple precinct of the Eastern gods on the Janiculum (Graeve 1972; Donderer 1991/2; Friese 2007; cp. Kristensen 2013b, 59–65), where the architecture of the temple is unusual if not unique. Outside of Rome, images of deified emperors were found in situ in the *sacellum* of the Augustales at Misenum (Miniero Forte 2000), while the sacellum of Dea Feronia at Aprutino contained a bronze representation of the goddess next to her base and an offering table (Sanzi di Mino and Staffa 2000).

17 Fauduet 2010, 303-14; Fauduet, Rabeisen, and Dupéré (2012) give a history of modern lists of Romano-Celtic temples and scholarship on them. On podium style temples in the western provinces see Trunk 1991.

18 Lewis 1966, 4–5; Jullien 1924, 155–7.

19 From the extensive literature on the Romano-Celtic temple, Fauduet (2010) is very much the standard handbook. Other summaries include Brunaux 1986, 17–27; Brunaux 2000, 91–111; Derks 1998, 131–210; Van Andringa 2002, 87–118.

20 Fuller discussions can easily be found elsewhere, e.g. Fauduet 2010, 143–151; Brunaux 1986, 17–27; Derks 1998, 168–185.

21 On the pre-Roman forms and the development of the Romano-Celtic sanctuary see Brunaux 2000, 91–112.

22 Fauduet 2010, 149–51; Derks 1998, 179–83.

23 Schaeren and Martin-Kilcher (2009, 37–50) note that the simple cella is comparable to some structures in Roman Italy.

24 Derks 1998, 243; Van Andringa 2002.

25 Gose 1972; Ghetta 2008, 82–96; Pechoux 2010, 396–404.

26 Kiernan 2012, 91–3; Derks 1998, 194; Spickermann 2003, 291; Martin-Kilcher 2009b, 202–4.

27 Sanxay: Aupert 1992; Marquaire 1994.

28 On pilgrimage to the Romano-Celtic sanctuary see Kiernan 2012. On the baths and theaters associated with Romano-Celtic temples: Fauduet 2010, 58–62.

29 Van Andringa 2002, 96.

30 Fauduet 2010, 67; Altjohann, Castella, Hufschmid, Meylan Krause, Rey-Vodoz 2008, 10–1.

31 Niblett 1999. Morel and Blanc 2008, 39–40; Castella 2008, 118–20.

32 Tisserand and Mouton-Venault 2012, 171–2.

33 Newel: Cüppers and Neyses 1971, 196–216; Bancroft: Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 13–129; Lullingstone villa includes a temple-mausoleum that contained two late Roman sarcophagi, but it is perhaps questionable to what extent this building may be counted as a temple. See Meates 1979, 122–31.

34 Jullian 1924, 144–6; Grenier 1943 and 1944; Forcey 1997; Aupert 2010, 295–300.

35 CAG 89/1.129:325, fig. 358 (Delor, 2002); Devauges 1973.

36 Parlasca 1998, 275–8. This interpretation of the cuttings as windows opposes an older theory that they were niches. The temple certainly contained larger niches, and its idol was possibly displayed in one on the western wall.

37 On money boxes (thesauri) in temples in antiquity see Crawford 2003.

38 Devauges 1973, 208–9. Pieces of a smaller statue were also found, the excavators reported only a left arm, a foot, and part of a leg survive, but neither the foot and leg of the smaller statue appear in the catalogue of sculpture from the site, nor is the left arm given any description beyond its length of 11.5 cm. (Devauges 1973, 203, 38.F 5–50.) If a whole arm is meant, this would make for a very small statue indeed, and certainly one that would fit on the small 30 × 30 cm base. But the arm was also found in the area outside of the temple, casting doubt on the existence of the smaller statue.

39 Devauges 1973, fig. 32.

40 CAG 89/1.129.7*:327, fig. 363 (Delor, 2002). Minerva or Mars have been proposed, based in part on a superbly preserved sculpture of Minerva that was found some 3 km away in 1853.

41 The site was published in parts in a series of journal articles, and finally in monographic form by Gose (1972), whose work is the most important reference for the site. For summaries see also Cüppers 1990, 588–91, and Ghetta 2008 82–96; Kuhnen 1996, 72–3 and passim; Wightman 1970, 215–19. Following the Second World War, the area was covered with debris from the ruined city of Trier, and has since been converted into public gardens, thus old temple site is well protected.

42 Gose 1972, 19–21 (building 4).

43 Gose 1972, 21, fig. 114. Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, 213–14, no. 426, pl. 108.

44 On the idol base, Gose 1972, 21, fig. 111 and 113; Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, 110–1, no. 217, pl. 54; Éspérandieu 7537 and 8406. Next to the overturned base lay the remains of another Mercury statue in limestone, this time carved in the round, resting in a thin layer of soot and debris from the destruction of the temple (**fig. 6**), as well as pieces of a Jupiter-Giant rider and other sculptures. Its stiff posture has led to the suggestion of a first century AD date for the second Mercury, and it is tempting to speculate that this Mercury statue was in fact the building's idol, but if so, it had long ceased to hold that position. The stratigraphy shows that both the Mercury and the Jupiter-Giant group were secondary deposits, since both sat above a destruction level, and had been deposited there at a time when the internal floor of the temple had already been removed. On the limestone Mercury see Gose 1972, 21–2, pl. 113 and 110; Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, 103, no. 198, pl. 51; Espérandieu 7602.

45 The inscription (Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, 110, no. 218.) is in a framed border and reads: DEO MERCVRIO / PEREGRINORVM / IVLIVS IVLIANVS / EX VOTO POSVIT –

"to the god Mercury of the Peregrini. Julius Julianus placed this as he vowed to do." The inscription appears to have been facing downward in the re-usage, but the excavation report is not entirely clear on this point.

46 Raepsaet-Charlier 1975, 240–1.

47 Gose 1972, 18 and 21, fig. 114.

48 Gose 1972, 21, fig. 114. The top third of the altar was intentionally chiseled away.

49 Gose 1972, 85–6, structure 23.

50 Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, 209–11, no. 420 pl. 108.

51 The main publication of the Mars Lenus sanctuary is Gose 1955, but see also Ghetta 2008, 99–102. Merten 1985, 44–61, Derks 2006. The site was excavated just prior to the First World War, with later campaigns in the 1920s and 1930s.

52 Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden (1988, 217, no. 434, pl. 109), misrepresents Gose's reconstruction of the temple interior by stating that the goddess figure sat upon this socle. Gose (1955, 26–7 and 35–6), however, is very clear that the goddess stood on the pedestal in the rear wall of the temple.

53 Gose 1955, 27–8.

54 Gose 1955, 32–3, fig. 25; Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, 198, no. 387, pl. 101; Landesmuseum, Trier Inv. Nr. S.T. 9760.

55 Marquaire 1994; cp. CAG 23.230:147, fig. 77 (1988, Dussot).

56 Marquaire 1994, 33–4.

57 Marquaire 1994, 55–8, fig. 48. The only other sculpture from the site is a half-sized torso of a naked youth with a cloak and was found in the monumental entrance on the east side of the site.

58 Marquaire 1994, 63.

59 For a discussion of these texts see Bertrand (1897, 400–5), who draws on Thiers 1697 (non vidi). The veneration of trees, springs, and stones was condemned both by the Second Council of Arles in AD 452 (Labbé and Cossart, 4:1013, canon 23), the Council of Tours in 567 (Canons 23 (22) = MGH.leges 3.1:133). In the 7th century, the contemporary biography of Saint Eligius (AD 588–660) depicts the saint preaching against the veneration of stones, springs, trees, and crossroads (Vita s. Eligii 16 = MGH.SRM 4:708).

60 See Chapter 3.

61 On the topic of water cults in Roman Gaul see Grenier 1960, and Bourgeois 1991 and 1992.

62 Miron 1994; Schwinden 1995.

63 Moitrieux 1992.

64 On trees, cp. again Chapter 3, and Hunt 2016 on tree worship in the central Roman world. Martin's adventure with the tree is told by biographer Sulpicius Severus (*Vita Martini* 13). For this and other exploits of Martin see Chapter 6.

65 Hoogeloon: Derks 1998, 156–7, fig. 4.12. On Niederzier cp. Chapter 2: Müller 2002, 164, fig. 113. Göbel, Hartmann, Joachim, and Zedelius 1991. Le Bernard: cp. Chapter 6, fig. 8, Baudry and Ballereau 1873; CAG 85.22:76–88 (Provost et al. 1996).

66 Horn 1987, 49–53, pl. 13.2; Biller 2010, 279. Cp. Chapter 3 on the Matronae.

67 Blin 2000, 104–14, figs. 12 and 13. The full discovery has not yet been published.

68 CAG 21/2.221.II:215-216 (Provost, Thevenot, and Goguey, 2009); Espérandieu 2032.

69 On the site Luik 1996, 47–9, and 2004, 110. Older bibliography (non vidi) is listed in in ORL 5.60:15–16 s.v. Köngen (Mettler, 1907).

70 Haug and Sixt 1900, 383–5, no. 497, fig. 224; Luik 1996, 175, no 2 = CIL 13,11727 = EDCS-12600030: *I(n) h(onorem) d(omus) d(ivinae) I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / platiae dex[trae c(ives)] / [Su]meloce(n)S(es) / vici Grinar(ionis) / maceriam d(e) s(uo) p(osuerunt)* – "In honor of the imperial household, the citizens of Sumelocenna of the vicus of Grinario put down this enclosure wall on the right side of the street with their own money." The inscription is problematic due to the reconstruction and meaning of platiae dextrae. It could plausibly also mean "The citizens living on the right side of the street to Sumelocenna," but I have followed here the translation of Haug and Sixt whose discussion explores the possible variations.

71 Le Martret 2013.

72 Fellmann 1992, 247–8, fig. 248; Strübin 1977.

73 Merkelbach 1984, 134; Clauss 2001, 42–3. Beck 2006.

74 Tienen: Martens 2004, 28; Güglingen: Kortüm and Neth 2005, fig. 175; Martigny: Wiblé 1995.

75 Klöckner 2011, 206.

76 Huld-Zetsch 1986; Hensen 2013.

77 Allason-Jones 2004.

78 Clauss 2001, 43. Güglingen: Kortüm and Neth 2005; Rome: Vermaseren 1956–60,

148–238, nos. 327, 338, 356, 381, 389, 399, 414, 434, 457, 464, and 476. Ostia: Vermaseren 1956–60, 114–8, nos. 216, 224, 226, 229, 232, 238, 239, 250, 264, 272, 278, 287, 294, 299, 300, and 309. I make no attempt to include Mithraea discovered after the publication of Vermaseren's corpus.

79 Huld-Zetsche 1986; Vermaseren 1956–60, 73, no. 1117.

80 Huld-Zetsche 1986, no. 28, now in the Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Frankfurt am Main, Inv. No. X 9351 (1887).

81 Speaking statues and statues with speaking tubes are known in both Egypt and Asia Minor, see Weddle 2010, 84–114 and Kristensen 2013b, 39–40 and 46–70.

82 Huld-Zetsche 1986, 30–1. The marble relief (Huld-Zetsche 1986, 77–81, no. 42) must have been a fairly costly import.

83 Wolff 1894, 57; Hulde-Zetsche 1986, 30.

84 Wolff 1894, 54–6; Huld-Zetsche 1986, 28.

85 Clauss 2001, 50 and 52. Curtains in Mithraea are mentioned in an inscription from Rome: Vermaseren 1956–60: no. 563: *aram cum suis ornamentis et bela domini insignia habentes n(umero) IIII* "An altar with its ornaments and four hangings with paintings of our Lord" = CIL 6,746. (Translation by Clauss). See also Vermaseren 1965–60, no. 233, an inscription from Ostia (CIL 14, 4314), which mentions a velum which itself seems to bear an image of the god. On wooden screens at Nida, see Hulde-Zetsche 1986, 28.

86 Mithraists can be seen lined up on a couch in a wall painting from the Barberini Mithraeum in Rome (LTUR 3: 263–4 (Gysens); Schatzmann 2004, fig. 1) and in a fragment of relief from the Mithraeum at Stockstad (Hessen, Vermaseren1956–60, no. 1175). A rotating relief from Konjic (Bosnia), shows Mithras and Sol dining in the Mithraeum while being served by the Mithraists, who wear masks representing their grades of initiation (Vermaseren 1956–60: no. 1896, fig. 490; Clauss 2001, fig. 69).

87 Klöckner 2011, 209–10. Klöckner notes that in Roman cemeteries certain funerary monuments were similarly arranged such that the deceased or his or her representation occupied a central position at the head of two parallel dining couches.

88 Gose 1972, 86–7, figs. 87 and 128; Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, 131–2, no. 266, pl. 63.

89 Kaufmann-Heinimann 2009a. On the beneficarius sanctuary at Osterburken, see below.

90 For a discussion of the different statues of divinities found in the temples of Pompeii see van Andringa 2011.

91 Lehner 1910, 306 and 316–7.

92 E.g. Thun-Allmendingen (Schaeren and Martin-Kilcher 2009, 50–1); Bierbach (Klein 1927 and 1929); La Graufesenque: (Schaad 2008, 87–107 fig. 104); Kempten (Weber 2004, 28).

93 Gundershoffen: Espérandieu 7:219–24, nos. 5647–57; Grenier 1960, 842–3; CAG 67/1.176:309–11 (2000, Flotté and Fuchs). Donon: CAG 67/1.165:298–306 (2000, Flotté and Fuchs); Gerlach 1951. It is debatable whether a temple was present at Donon, or if the rough natural rocks at the top of the mountain served as the holiest part of the site.

94 Moitrieux 1992, no. 15.

95 Moitrieux 1992, esp. 113–4.

96 CBIFR nos. 145–75.

97 Huther and Schallmayer 2005; Schallmayer and Preuß 1994.

98 Gose 1972, 12–13, structures 1–2. The base to the right of the apsis could possibly have been used to support an engaged column that in turn supported a domed roof of the apse, comparable to the one proposed for the mother goddess temple in the Mars Lenus complex (**fig. 14**).

99 See the discussion of terms in See pp. 5–9. The epigraphic evidence is too complicated to be explored here. To give but one example, an inscription from Idenheim (near Bitburg, Rheinland-Pfalz) reads: *Deo Mercur/io sac(rum) Sautus / Novialchi fil(ius) / aedes duas cum / suis ornamen/tis et tribu{r}n/a(lia?) v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)* – "A sacred thing for the god Mercury, Sautus, the son of Novialicus, (gave) two temples with their ornaments and tribunals. He fulfilled his vow gladly and deservedly." (CIL 13,4123= EDCS-10601093) Gose interpreted the "tribuna" as the socle (1955, 13) on which the dedicated statues stood. A comprehensive study of the objects dedicated in Latin votive inscriptions is a major desiderata in the study of Roman religion.

100 Derks 1998, 231–3.

101 On the Schneidershecke watchtower group and their display: Oldenstein 1980; Baatz 1973, 135–42; ORL A.10:80–88, fig. 10 (Fabricius 1925) with older bibliography. On the

famous "Temple of Janus" at Autun: CAG 71/1:97–103 (Rebourg, 1995); Parscala 1998. The temple evidently included a niche for the idol on the internal side of its west wall, as well as two large niches on the north and south walls.

102 The well preserved circular cella at Barzan (Moulin de Fâ) and the Tour de Vésone (Dordogne) both lack ground level windows. Aupert 2010, 287–365; Fauduet 2010, 128–32.

103 See p. 277.

104 Gell 1998, 133–43.

105 Estienne 2010 (See Chapter 1).

106 E.g. Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 61. For a discussion of chaining see *ThesCRA* 2:468–9 (Icard-Gioanolio, 2004).

107 Macrob. *Sat.* 1.8.5; Arn. *Adv. nat.* 4.24; Min. Fel. *Oct.* 22.5; Richardson 1992, 343.

108 *ThesCRA* 2:475, no. 529 = SHA *Heliogab.* 6.9: *haec cum ita essent, signum tamen quod Palladium esse credebat abstulit et auro vinctum in sui dei templo locavit.* This reading, accepts *vinctum*, instead of *tinctum*, the latter implying the object was plated or colored with gold.

CHAPTER 5

1 For a discussion of these "life-events" and ancient accounts of statues doing things, in the Greek and Roman world see Bremmer 2013; Perry 2015; and *ThesCRA* 2:463–8 (Icard-Gionolio, 2004).

2 Platt 2011, 31–50, on votive reliefs, and 114–22 on the conventional depiction of statutes in Greek art. On similar appearances of gods in Greek vase painting, besides what are clearly statues, depicted in archaic style, see Alroth 1992.

3 Klöckner, forthcoming.

4 The relief was collected by Simon Studion of Marbach and donated to Ludwig of Baden-Württemberg in 1583 along with 17 other Roman monuments. The latter incorporated these monuments into the Neues Lusthaus in Stuttgart. Since the nineteenth century its find spot is routinely and erroneously been given as Conweiler, also in the Enzkreis, but a recent reconsideration of the piece's history shows it must come from Weiler (See Willburger 2017, 285). Today the relief is in the Landesmuseum Württemberg in Stuttgart, Inv. no. RL 389. Haug and Sixt 1900, no. 112; Espérandieu 479; Flitzinger 1980, 86–7, no. 40; Willburger 2011 and 2017, 284–5, no. 66.

5 *ThesCRA* 1.2d.M:406, nos.618–22 (Bauchhenss, 2004). Otterstadt cauldron, with a dedication to Mercury from Vassetus: Klumbach 1940; *ThesCRA* 1:406, no.621, erroneously described as from Ottersbach), Petrovsky 2006, fig. 263.

6 Luc. De Dea Syr. esp. 36–7. On the relationship between dreams, visions, and statues in the Greek world see Platt 2011, 253–92.

7 August. *De Civ. D.* 6.10, reproduced in Chapter 1.

8 Liv. 26.19.5.

9 Sen. *Ep.* 41,1 (Translation by R. M. Gummere 1961).

10 *ThesCRA* 2:462 nos. 414–20 (Linant de Bellefonds, 2004); cp. Naiden 2006, esp. 253–60.

11 Plaut. *Rud* 560-: . . . *duae mulierculae hic in fano Veneris signum flentes amplexae tenent* . . . "two girls here in the temple weeping and clutching the image of Venus" (my translation). On the passage and other instances of supplication in Plautus see Naiden 2006, 375–9; Serv. Aen. 3.60 (On Aeneid 3.607): *physici dicunt esse consecratas numinibus singulas corporis partes* . . . *frontem genio, unde venerantes deum tangimus frontem* . . . "The philosophers say that each of the parts of the body are dedicated to spirits (*numinibus*), such that the ear is for Memory . . . the forehead is for the Genius, thus when venerating a god we touch his forehead; the right hand to Fides". Statues displayed outside of temples were also touched, thus Lucretius (1.316) describes how bronze statues near gates wear down as a resulting of people saluting them with a touch. Further examples of touching statues and other objects are to be found in *ThesCRA* 3:163–4 (Voutiras, 2005).

12 Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.94

13 *ThesCRA* 3:163 (Voutiras, 2005). As a regular supplicant, Tibullus touches and kisses the doors and thresholds of temples (Tib. 1,2,86); Cp. Servius 4.219 on touching altars.

14 Physical contact with cult objects and images see *ThesCRA* 2:163–4 (Fyntikoglou and Voutiras, 2004); Gell 1998, 102–81 and Weddle 2010.

15 Unction by Arval Brethren of goddess Dea Dia, possibly in conjunction with a banquet see Scheid 1990, 525–7 and 625–7 and *ThesCRA* 2:427 no. 81 (Linant de Bellefonds,

2004). The anointing of statues is often associated with offerings of crowns: *ThesCRA* 2:427 and 458, nos. 76–7, 79, and 368 (Linant de Bellefonds, 2004).

16 Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.77. Other images were anointed as well. For example, it was common practice for the statue representing the genius of an individual to be anointed at the family *lararium* on his birthday, and images of the deceased in lararia and funerary monuments. Cp. Tibullus 1.7.49–52 (= *ThesCRA* 2:427 no. 77 (de Bellefonds, 2004) on the anointing of the Genius of Messala.

17 Vitr. 7.9.3.

18 Plin. *HN* 15.32; Richardson 1992, 343. For other uses of oil on ivory see *ThesCRA* 2:421–2 (Linant de Bellefonds, 2004). The re-use of the oil in the image of Saturn recalls the Byzantine practice of healing oils and waters than have been exposed to the relics of saints.

19 Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 287b–c, d; Cp. Plin. *HN* 33.111–12 and 35.157 on Capitoline Jupiter.

20 The 1926 trench could be connected to temple six after renewed excavations at the site in 1967 (**Table 4.16**). By 1967, the upper layers of the site had evidently been plundered or removed, and only the foundations of the temple were observed, thus the preserved floor seen in1926 was no longer present. The marble statuette (H. 62 cm) was found near the base, with its head detached from its body, but is too small to have stood on the base. It was probably a votive offering, a costly import from North Africa. Either it stood directly on the pressed earth floor of the sanctuary, or was displayed on a wooden base (Bossert 2000, 30–3, no. 7, pl. 8; Kaufmann-Heinimann 2009a, 73–6).

21 EDCS-11201818; Kaufmann-Heinimann 2009, 65–7, fig. 5/2.

22 Kaufmann-Heinimann 2009, 66, figs. 5/3–5. The realistic model theory is based on Roman provincial coins issued in Caesarea in Cappadocia that show the cult image of Argaeus, the highest mountain in the Taurus range.

23 Martin-Kilcher 2009c, 234. Martin-Kilcher assumed that the *unguentaria* were used for a marble statue of a female divinity, possibly Annona, which was also found on the temple's floor (see above and note 18). This is entirely possible, but is predicated on the assumption that the idol of Alpes was a naturalistic depiction of the mountains, as Kaufmann-Heinimann (2009a) proposed.

24 A candidate for such a pool for bathing statues has been identified at Paestum (*ThesCRA* 2.5. I.B.47 [Linant de Bellefonds, 2004]).

25 Ov. *Fast.* 4.337–40. See *ThesCRA* 2:425–6 (Linant de Bellefonds, 2004), with further references.

26 Ov. *Fast.* 4.135–9 (Translation by R. Woodard)

27 Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 8.56.4. In Greece, Phidias' famous statue of Zeus at Olympia was still being cared for by the descendants of its sculptor as late as the second century AD. Phidias' famous statue of Zeus at Olympia was still being cared for by the descendants of its sculpture as late as the second century AD.

28 Amm. Marc. 23.3.7.

29 Gasparini 2013, 205. A votive inscription to Isis in Nîmes was made by a woman with the title of *ornat(rix) f(ani):* (CIL 12, 3061 = EDCS-09201528): *T(itia) Savinis / ornatr(ix) f(ani?) / {H}Isidi v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito.*

30 Fauduet 2010, 92–3.

31 *ThesCRA* 5:420 (Linant de Bellefonds, 2004).

32 *ThesCRA* 2: 427–37 (Kaufmann-Samaras and Szabados, 2004).

33 Prop. 4.2.

34 Plin. *HN* 8.197 and Plin. *HN* 34.34. See Chapter 2.

35 Capelle 2002, 61; Behm-Blancke et al. 2002-2003: 1. pl. 9.1–2 and 2.111, pl. 57.5–6. See p. 78.

36 Hoppe and Gebhard 2012. See Chapter 2.

37 Nickel, Thoma, and Wigg-Wolf 2008, 116, fig. 87.16.

38 Stuart and Bogaers 2001, 25. Now in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Inv. No. i 1970/12.12. On dressed idols in processions see Sulpicius Severus (*Vit. Mart.* 12.2) reproduced below.

39 *ThesCRA* 2:434, no. 123 (Blanc, 2004) = CIL 14. 02215 = EDCS-05800178.

40 Zosimus 5.38.3–4.

41 EDCS-08400934 = CIL 12, 354: *Deo Aesculapio / Val(eri) Symphorus et Protis / signum Somni aereum / torquem aureum ex dracun/culis duobus p(ondo) |(?) enchiridium / argenti p(ondo) |(?) anabolium ob in/signem circa se numinis eius / effectum v(otum) s(olverunt) l(ibentes) m(erito):* "Symphorus son of Valerius (or Valerius Symphorus) and Protis had a bronze image of Somnus made, a gold torc made of two dragons weighing [. . .], a surgical instrument

(*enchiridium*) of silver weighing [. . .] and a cloak (? anabolium) for putting around the image (*insignem*) of this god (numinis). They fulfilled their their vow gladly and willingly."

42 Fauduet 2010, 260; CAG 51/1.108.18★:296, fig. 185. AE 2004, 935 = EDCS-33800001 = HD-052104: *S[m]ertulitano deo / L(ucius) Victorius Censorin[u]s / sacerdos eiusd(em) numinis d(onum) d(edit) // et fib[u]/las/ duas / inaura/vit* – "Lucius Victorius Censorinus gave (this statuette) as a gift to the god Smertulitanus, and had two fibulae gold plated." The second dedication of fibulae is recorded on the side of the base.

43 Martin-Kilcher (2009a) suggested a total length of around 23 cm, roughly half that of very similar necklaces that that combine eight or nine blue glass and rolled tubes of gold. If the five pieces of the necklace represent the object in its entirety, then the length of the necklace would have been far too small for a human to wear. In Martin-Kilcher's view, this allowed for the conclusion that a marble statuette of Annona found in the cella wore the necklace, but I have difficulty accepting that the five recovered beads are the totality of the necklace. Not only can small beads be easily lost in an excavation, other beads may also have been collected by looters in antiquity. Moreover, if the necklace was too small for human use, what was the point in halving it? The other half would have been useless. It seems more probable that the beads represent a once complete necklace that was worn by the statue of *Alpes*.

44 Cattelain and Paridaens 2009, 45–6.

45 E.g. Ovid (Fast. 4.743) describes baskets and cakes of millet (*libaque de milio milii fiscella*) that are particularly favored by the goddess Pales, and served with other dishes (*dapes*) and libations of warm milk (*tepido lacte*) on the Parilia. For a collection of the many sources on food offerings to idols see *ThesCRA* 2:5.III.B:444–8 (Blanc, 2004).

46 On the *lectisternium* and other banquets see *TheSCRA* 2:448–51 (Blanc 2004). The first recorded instance is described by Livy (5.13) and occurred in 399 BC in response to a plague. Beard, North, and Price (1998, 1:63) interpret the *lectisternium* as an important step in the development of Roman religion, in which anthropomorphic gods that require food and suffer from hunger emerge.

47 Prop. 4.2.47–54.

48 *ThesCRA* 2:444–5 (Blanc, 2004) and Estienne 2001, 189–90.

49 Dion. Hal. 2.23.5 (Translation by E. Cary).

50 Stuart and Bogaers 2001, 25. Pls. 114–16.

51 Kiernan 2012, 96–100; Fontes Sequanae: Deyts 1994 and Aldhouse-Green 1999; Mars Lenus sanctuary: Gose 1954, 42–7, pl. 21–31.

52 Ryberg 1955.

53 Öhringen: Fellendorf-Börner and Olshausen 1989; Nuber 2005, 449, fig. 600. The inscription (EDCS-05200530) reads: *In h(onorem) d(omus) d(ivinae) h(oc) Eponae / signum P(ublius) Iunius Ins/idus V(ovit) L(ibens) L(aetus) M(erito)* – "In honour of the divine household, Publius Junius Insidus vowed this image (*signum*) of Epona, freely, joyfully and deservedly."

54 Paus. 2.11.6; On garlands and ribbons in Pausanias see Weddle 2010, 52.

55 Prop. 4.2. See discussion above.

56 The placement of garlands on the socles of statues: *ThesCRA* 2:455 nos. 344–6 (Lochin and Blanc, 2004); on wreaths and crowns placed on statues of divinities: *ThesCRA* 2:451–2 (Lochin and Blanc, 2004).

57 Apul. *Met.* 2.4 and 3.27. On the iconography of Epona see Chapter 3.

58 E.g. Stuart and Bogaers 2001, 114, no. B17, pl. 115; Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, Jupiter-Giant columns with floral decoration and the altars of the *Matronae* see Chapter 3.

59 E.g. Allison 2004, on the relationship between finds and Pompeian houses; Martens and de Böe (2004) on small finds in Mithraea. Exemplary recent studies of small find distribution in Romano-Celtic temple sites have been conducted for Thun-Allmendingen (Martin-Kilcher and Schatzmann 2009) and the Martberg (Nickel, Thoma, and Wigg-Wolf 2008).

60 This is the case, for example, with miniature metal wheels and miniature weapons that are sometimes found clustered in large groups certain late Iron Age and early Roman sanctuary sites in northern Gaul. For a discussion see Kiernan 2009.

61 Thun-Allmendingen: Martin-Kilcher 2009c. Puy Lautard: Marquaire 1994, 61–2, fig. 52. The Martberg: Nickel, Thoma, and Wigg-Wolf 2008, 605–26; Wigg-Wolf 2005.

62 Martin-Kilcher 2009c, 233 and Frey-Kupper 2009, 200.

63 Kortüm and Krmnicek forthcoming.

64 See Chapter 4; Blin 2000 and Le Martret 2013.

65 Sauer 2004.

66 Mauss 1990.

67 Madigan 2013. On processions see also *TheSCRA* 1.1:33–58 (Fless, 2004) and Weddle 2010, 119–29.

68 Madigan 2013, 1–39.

69 Madigan 2013, 39–66. Further examples of images on *fercula* and *tensa* see *ThesCRA* 1:41–3 (Fless, 2004).

70 Von Rohden and Winnefeld 1911, 304, pl. 136; *ThesCRA* 1.1:42, no. 36, pl. 11 (Fless, 2004); Madigan 2013, 45–6, fig. 20. Louvre, Inv. No. CP 4324.

71 Madigan 2013, 67–82.

72 Madigan 2013, 83–102. *ThesCRA* 5:410 (Hölscher, 2005) on *exuviae* in *sellisternia* and *lectisternia*.

73 Apul. *Met.* 11.8.17ff. Turcan (1996, 114–16) summarizes the event with commentary.

74 Apul. *Met.* 8. 24ff. The term *simulacrum* appears in 9.10, the image is initially referred to simply as the *dea Syria* in the earlier passages.

75 Apul. *Met.* 9.10: . . . *cantharoque et ipso simulacro, quod gerebam, apud fani donarium redditis ac consecratis* . . .

76 Tac. *Germ.* 9. 2; Haase 2001.

77 Sulpic. *Vit. Mart.* 12.2 (Translation by C. White).

78 Maximus of Turin, sermo 105.2; Gregory of Tours *Glor. Confess.* 76 (reproduced in Chapter 6).

79 Vial and Kaufmann-Heinimann 2007. On the *ferarum imagines* of the Batavians (Tac. *Hist.* 4.22.2) See p. 42.

80 *AVG(usto) RVDIOBO SACRVM / CVR(ia) CASSICIATE(nsis) D(e) S(ua) P(ecunia) D(edit) / SER(vius) ESVMAG(l)IVS SACROVI<R> SER(vius) (R)IOMAGLIVS SEVERVS / F(aciendum) C(uraverunt)* – “To the august Rudiobus, the curia of Cassiciatus gave this sacred object using its own money. The priest Servius Esumaglius and Servius Riomgaglius Severus oversaw its making.” The reading is not unproblematic. For a discussion see Lambert 2007. EDCS-10502125 = CIL 13,3071.

81 Vial and Kaufmann-Heinimann 2007, 53–5; Mille 2007, 98–9, figs. 19–21.

82 For an overview see Flueckiger 2015, 85–92.

83 Ap. met. 11.27, cp. Gasparini 2013, 203.

84 Eck 1985, 57. On domestic *puja* see Courtright 1985.

85 Eck 1985, 57. Ap. Met. 10 and 11.

86 Eck 1985, 55–7; Waghorne 1992, 9.

87 Waghorne 1992, 9–11.

88 Waghorne 1992, 31.

89 Gose 1972, 12–13, temple 1/2. See p. 187.

90 Eck 1985, 57. Cp. Rutherford (1990, 144–5), who makes this same point about processions of images in the Greek world.

91 Courtright 1985, 33; Eck 1985, 45–8.

92 Eck 1985, 48.

93 Flueckiger 2015, 93.

CHAPTER 6

1 Nylander 1998, 238.

2 Varner 2004. Cp. Kristensen 2013b, 24–7.

3 On the decapitation, mutilation and destruction of Iron Age statues see Armit 2012, 190–4.

4 Sauer 1996; Fauduet 2010, 160–1.

5 Martin 1987, 11–50 and see Chapter 2.

6 A preliminary and much shorter version of this chapter was presented at the *Afterlife of Roman Sculpture II* conference in Aarhus in 2011, and published in the subsequent proceedings (Kiernan 2016).

7 Most recently by Noelke (2007), who provides bibliography drawing the same conclusion that extends well back into the nineteenth century, and Ghetta (2008, 111) with further literature for area of Trier in particular.

8 For a summary of the period see Drinkwater 2005, 41–8; Nuber 2005; King 1990, 172–9; Steidel 2000; Bernhard 2006; Heimberg 2006.

9 Bernhard 2006; Künzl 1993, 487–92; Cüppers 1990, 117–22; Wightmann 1985, 198–9.

10 Reuter 2007. On the possible resettlement of the inhabitants of the *agri decumates* in the *decem pagi* under Aurelian see Hind 1984.

11 Wilkes 2005, 219–20.

12 Hagenbach: Bernhard et al. 1990; Neupotz: Künzl 1993; Historischen Museum der Pfalz 2006. For recent interpretations of the role of silver plate and cut-up pieces of silver (*Hacksilber*) in Late Antiquity both in and outside of the Roman Empire, see Hunter and Painter 2013.

13 Gregory of Tours *Hist.* 1.32, my translation after that of Dalton.

14 Ghetta 2008, 71; Dalton 1927, 485–6; MGH.-SRM 4.1, 25 note 1. The Bitburg inscription is CIL 13.04130 = EDCS-10601099: *In h(onorem) d(omus) [d(ivinae)] / deo Mercur[io] / Vassocaleti / Mandaloniu[s] / Gratus d(onum) [d(edit)].*

15 Noelke 2007 with older bibliography that extends well back into the nineteenth century drawing the same conclusion.
16 Noelke 2007.
17 Noelke 2007, 291–307. Cp. Kuhnen 1992, 91–3 and Kousser 2010, 127.
18 Rabold 2005, 161–8.
19 Noelke and Bauchhenß 1981, 156, no. 250.
20 Noelke 2007, 349, no. 19, fig. 8; Bauchenß and Noelke 1981, 155, nos. 249–52. The excavator, Heukemes (1975, 42), saw the damage as a result of a fall.
21 Noelke and Bauchenß 1981, 156, no. 253.
22 Heukemes 1975; My thanks to Andreas Hensen, director of the Lobdengau Museum, for this information about the sizes of the two capital groups.
23 Noelke 2007, 291 and 349; Heukemes 1975, 43.
24 Steidl 2005, 150.
25 Noelke 2007, 306.
26 See Chapter 1 and 3. Of course, such a model may be of some attraction to post-colonialist schools of thought on Roman imperialism.
27 Schmidt 2005, 126–8, figs. 120–3; Heckmann 2014. For a brief discussion of fragments of bronze statues in Roman Britain, and their status as scrap of ritual objects see Croxford 2016.
28 Drinkwater 2007, 136–42.
29 Hanemann 2006; Künzl 1993, 365–78, cat. nos. J25–50, pls. 664–82.
30 On the Augsburg Victory altar see Bakker 2005.
31 Schröter 1985.
32 Plut. *Marc.* 21. Marcellus is contrasted with Fabius Maximus, who intentionally left alone the “injured statues” of the Tarentines.
33 Tac. *Ann.* 1.51, 1.31 and 14.30; Noelke 2007, 207.
34 See Levick (1999, 118 and note 34) with sources and a discussion of whether or not the destruction of the Jewish temple was intentional or not.
35 Noelke 2007, 308–17.
36 Noelke 2007, 308, cat. nos. 45–46 and 15.
37 For a detailed history of the events of the fourth and fifth century see Bernhard 1990; Blockley 1998; and Todd 1997; Innes 2007, 63–130, and on the ethnogenesis of the Alamanni in particular, see Drinkwater 2007, 43–79. A good survey of recent literature on the end of antiquity in western Europe can be found in Innes 2007, 54–62 and 130–8.
38 Salv. *Gub. Dei* 6.7–8 = MGH.AA. 1.73–75. Cp. Spickermann 2003, 497.
39 Jacobs 2011; Kristensen 2013b; Kristensen and Stirling 2016.
40 See Chapter 1.
41 Ghetta 2008, 110, note 218; Gose 1955, 24–5; Kyll 1961, 167–73; Schindler 1965, 105.
42 Warland 2005; Ghetta 2008, 265–77.
43 Noelke 2007, 299; Synod of Elvira canon 60: *Si quis idola fregerit et ibidem fuerit occisus, quatenus in evangelio scriptum non est neque invenietur sub apostolis umquam factum, placuit in numerum eum non recipi martyrum.* On the complicated question of the dating of the synod see the posthumous essay of de Ste. Croix (2006) and the commentary of Streeter (2006).
44 Examples include a Saint Sabinianus in the second century (Zwicker 207.16), the martyrs Speusippus, Eleusippus, and Meleuseppus, who destroyed 12 temples and idols, as well as a statue of Nemesis at Langres, again in the late second century (Zwicker 213.25, from a seventh or ninth century hagiography), Saint Clarus, who destroyed statues of named gods in the third century according to an eleventh century vita (Zwicker 253.10), Frontonis of Périgueux, who supposedly destroyed temples in the first century AD according to a tenth century vita (Zwicker 251.5), and the Bishop Eucharius, who is recorded in a sixteenth century inscription as having destroyed a statue of Venus in Trier at the impossibly early date of AD 50 (Kiernan 2016, 219–20, fig. 6, and below, fig. 7).
45 Louth 2004; Cameron 1998, 698–702.
46 *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.12; See also discussions in Kristensen 2013b, 18–20 and passim; Stirling 2005, 158–63 and Brown 1998. The relevant legal texts are *Cod. Theod.* 16.10, esp. *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.10–21.
47 Summarized by Bertrand 1897, 400–5; see also Ghetta 2008, 275–7.
48 Stirling (2005, 156–64) notes instances of imperial where pagan buildings and images are actually protected by law. E.g. *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.8 and *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.15 seem to protect works of art, while *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.18 is concerned with empty temple buildings.
49 Wrede 1972. Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier 1984, 286–9, no. 151.
50 Prud. *c. Symm.* 1.502–6; Cassiod. *Var.* 7.13. On the movement of statues in late antique Rome see Curran 1994. Curran argues against

the view that all movements of statues in Rome were from temples to public places as a means of desacralizing pagan idols. See also Stewart 2003, 118–21 and 148–56.

51 *Cod. Theod.* 16.10. 20, 3: *Sane si quondam consecrata sacrificiis deceptionem hominum praestiterunt, ab usibus lavacrorum vel publicis affectibus separentur, ne illecebram errantibus praestent.* (415 aug. 30).

52 Stancliffe 1983, 328–40.

53 Sulpicius Severus *Vita Martini* 13.

54 Sulpicius Severus Dialogues 2.9.1–4 (Translation by A. Roberts).

55 On column monuments and idols as a topos in Christian and medieval hagiography and art see Kristensen 2014, 271–3.

56 Sulpicius Severus *Dialogues* 2.8.4–7: *In vico Ambatiensi, id est castello veteri, . . . idolium noueratis grande opere constructum. Politissimis saxis moles turrita surrexerat, quae in conum sublime procedens superstitionem loci operis dignitate servabat.*

57 Sulpicius Severus *Vita Martini* 14.6–7. Exhortations to root up idols and standing stones "down to their very foundations" may be found in the homilies of Saint Eligius and in the wording of the Council of Nantes, ca. 742 (Labbé and Cossart 9. 474).

58 Sulpicius Severus *Vita Martini* 15.1 and 15.3.

59 Ghetta 2008, 241–3; Maximus of Turin *sermo* 105.2; Stancliffe 1983, 331. The lustrum was presumably a procession with an idol culminating in a sacrifice.

60 Gregory of Tours *Glor. Confess.* 76 (Translation by Van Dam).

61 The exact dates of Maurilius are uncertain, he is sometimes dated to the early fifth century, as is the attribution of his earliest *vita* to Magnobodus. The text could have been written been Gregory of Tours. In either case, the text informs us that he was born in the reign of Julian and lived for ninety years, which would put his death in the year 453, but this seems unlikely on the basis of the other events mentioned in the vita. For a full discussion see AASS 62–71.

62 Magnodobus 2 = AASS Sept. 13, p. 72, D = Zwicker 192.19–26.

63 Magnodobus 6 = AASS Sept. 13, p. 73 A = Zwicker 192.27–193.1–5.

64 Magnodobus 19 = AASS Sept. 13, p. 74 D = Zwicker 193.7–25.

65 Maximus of Turin *sermo* 42.1: *Requiramus, ne ignorantibus nobis in possessione nostra sit idolum!* (my translation).

66 Maximus of Turin *sermo* 107.1: *. . . (conmonueram) . . . ut . . .idolorum omnem pollutionem de vestris possessionibus auferretis, et erueretis ex agris universum gentilitatis errorem.* (Translation by Ramsey)

67 Sermo 108: *Non parum tractatu dominicae superioris profecisse vos credimus, siquidem praedictione nostra ab omni idolorum inquinamento corda vestra purgavimus.*

68 Synod of Elvira, canon 41.

69 Zwicker 232.14–17 (from the Chronicle of Adonis, Bishop of Vienne, written around AD 875) and 234.14–26 (from an anonymous eleventh century life of Severus).

70 Arn. *Adv. Nat.* 6.20; Justin, *Apol.*, 1.9.

71 Gregory of Tours, *Hist.* 8.15 = MGH.SRM 1.1:381.14–15.

72 Gregory of Tours, *Hist.* 8.15 = MGH.SRM 1.1:382.1–13. See also Ghetta 2008, 276.

73 Gregory the Great *Dialogues* 2.8.93–106 (Translation by C. White).

74 Thus Sauer 2003, 10–13; Spickermann 2003, 495.

75 Jonas *Vitae Columbani Abbatis et discipulorumque eius libri duo,* 1.10 = MGH.SRM 4.76 = Clemens 32. My translation.

76 E.g. Jonas *Vitae Columbani Abbatis et discipulorumque eius libri duo,* 1.27 = MGH.SRM 4.102 – preventing an offering of beer to Mercury amongst the Suebi. The story is also recounted by Sauer 2003, 10–13.

77 On the date of the second voyage of Columbanus, see MGH.SRM 4.229.

78 The text here is from Walahfridus *Vita Galli* 1.4.26–7 and 30 = MGH.SRM 4.287–8; cp. Wettinus *Vita Galli* 1.4 = MGH.SRM 4.260.

79 Wettinus *Vita Galli* 1.5 = MGH.SRM 4.260; Walahfridus *Vita Galli* 1.5. = MGH.SRM 4.288. See also Sauer 2003, 10–13.

80 Walahfridus *Vita Galli* 6. = MGH.SRM 4.289.10–11: *Isti sunt dii veteres et antiqui huius loci tutores, quorum solatio et nos et nostra perdurant usque in praesens.*

81 Walahfridus *Vita Galli* 1.6 = MGH.SRM 4.289; Wettinus *Vita Galli* 1.4 = MGH.SRM 4.260. Sauer (2003, 12) describes the idols as being found inside the church, but this does not seem to be in the texts, which explicitly mention a separate temple.

82 Zwicker 225.10–25. The text pre-dates the ninth century. Later versions of the same story also exist: Zwicker 226–7.

83 The Latin of both passages '*Quid me persequeris*' is presumably a direct parody of the Vulgate's '*Saule, Saule quid me persequeris?*' of Acts 22.7.

84 Saradi 2008.

85 Kristensen 2013, 76–85.

86 Kristensen 2013b, 77–85 (The Marneion and idols of Gaza), 119–125 (The Serapeum in Alexandria), and 137–46 (on Shenoute and the destruction of idols in Upper Egypt).

87 Kristensen 2013b, 146–75.

88 Kristensen 2013b, 96 (on a bust of Germanicus in the British Museum), 125–7 (on Egyptian examples) and *passim*.

89 Brown 2016.

90 Marinescu 1996, 291; Burkhardt 2016.

91 Kristensen (2012) identified three examples of cross-marked statues in Italy, one in Spain and one in North Africa.

92 Sauer 2003, 27 and 38; Kristensen 2013b, 223–9 with further bibliography.

93 Castorio, Fetet, and Gaffiot 2007, fig. 6.

94 Lindquist 2012.

95 See Chapter 2. Examples include the torc held by the seated warrior at Roquepertuse (Fig. 2.10).

96 On the Altbachtal temple complex in general see Chapter 4. On the cause and date of its destruction see Loeschcke 1942, 156; Cüppers 1990, 591.

97 Gose 1972, 179; Ghetta 2008, 82–90.

98 Ghetta 2008, 91–2; Gose 1972, 188–93, pl. 313–4.

99 Ghetta 2008, 82–90; Gose 1972, 192.

100 Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier 1984, 266–8, no. 71; Ghetta 2008, 278.

101 Kristensen (2013b, 232–40) discusses the case of a colossal porphyry seated togatus and a large marble seated statue (possibly a Zeus) that were redisplayed in a mutilated state in the courtyard of a gymnasium building at Caesarea Maritima in the sixth century AD, as well as a damaged marble Tyche was on display in the peristyle of another building in the same city.

102 Vermaseren 1956–60, 110, no. 1275; 65–6, no. 1083, 114, no. 1283.

103 Sauer 2003, 79–88. On Königshofen: Forrer 1915, 75–9; Espérandieu 5530–5539. Sarrebourg: Vermaseren 1956–60, 129–39, nos. 1335–75; the relief is no. 1359.Von Fisenne 1896, 159–61.

104 Sauer 2003, 79–82 (figs. 42 and 43); Forrer 1915, 79.

105 Frankfurt-Nida: Vermaseren 1956–60, 64, no. 1083, Badische-Landesemuseum Karlsruhe 2013, 252 no. 161 (illus.); Ladenburg: Vermaseren 1956–60, 111, no. fig. 334, 1275, Heidelberg-Neuenheim: Vermaseren 1956–60, 114–5, no. 1283, fig. 337.

106 Kemkes 2005, 203, fig. 230 (Epona from Esslingen), 204–5, fig. 236 (Genius from Bad Wimpfen).

107 Sauer 2003, 23–46.

108 Vermaseren 1956–60, 117, no. 1292, figs 340–2, now in the Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe.

109 The Dieburg Mithraeum: Vermaseren 1956–60, 103–10, nos. 1246–71; Sauer 2003, 25–30; Schneiderschecke: Kemkes 2005, 203, fig. 234 (see also Chapter 3).

110 Baigl, and Vernou 2001/2 (here Fig. 3.15), thought to have been deposited significantly earlier than 430, by which point a villa that had been built over an older temple.

111 See Chapter 5.

112 Gose 1955, 26. On the chapel with a mother goddess see Chapter 4.

113 Castorio, Fetet, and Gaffiot 2007.

114 Weisgerber 1975, 56–63 and 80, pls. 48–51, 54–55 and 74.1; Ghetta 2008, 307–9; Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, nos. 12–13, pl. 4–5 and no. 317, pl. 76.

115 Merrifield 1987, 99–100.

116 Martin-Kilcher and Schatzmann 2009, 39, fig. 4/4 and 220–3; Bossert 2000.

117 Castorio, Fetet, and Gaffiot 2007.

118 Faust 2002.

119 Croxford 2003, 84–90; Kristensen 2013b, 89–106.

120 Examples of *Viergöttersteine* with mutilated faces include those from Godramstein near Landau (Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981 134, no. 186/7., pl. 20), Bad Kreuznach (Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 96–7 no. 39, pl. 3) Kehlen (Wilhelm 1974, 48 no. 309, pl. 108), Luxembourg (Wilhelm 1974, 47, no. 307, pl. 109) and Amberloup (Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 492–3, no. 209).

121 Stewart 2003, 290–8. The idea is by no means entirely Roman. Nylander (1980) found that the famous bronze head of an Akkadian ruler, usually identified as Sargon (2340–c. 2284 BC) found at Nineveh had been mutilated in the same way that later Achaemenid ruler Darius is recorded as treating rebellious kings: its eyes have been gouged

out, the ears and nose clipped, and the beard trimmed.

122 Kristensen 2013b, 175–85.

123 Ghetta 2008, 278.

124 Kousser 2010, 130–3; Kyll 1969, 339.

125 Ludwig and Marzolff 2008, 43–54.

126 Ghetta 2008, 278. Wilhelm 1974, 47–8 nos. 306, 309–11 and 63, no. 403 (a Sucellus relief).

127 Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier 1984, 203–4, fig. 91a (statue) and 91b (base). Binsfeld, Goethert-Polaschek, and Schwinden 1988, 165, no. 333, pl. 81 (statue). Kristensen 2013b, 242, fig. 3.24; Kiernan 2016, 220, fig. 6.

128 Author's translation. The base includes a garbled Latin version, which reads: *Me pridem Treviris colvit / Profanis aris iam truncus / sacrilegi numinis prostrata / spernor inanis et dum Petrus / piscator legat Eucharium / Valerium Maternum Tunc / (Huius Superstitionis) tollitur error / Ao post Christum natu romamissias: Petro / Treveros venerunt Euch. Vals: Mat. 50* (author's reading based on the stone on display in the museum in Trier) The gist of the garbled text seems to be comparable to that of the German.

129 Wilhelm 1974, 48 no. 309, pl. 108. I have not had the opportunity to view this piece in person, but from the published illustration it seems quite possible the head of Hercules is a medieval addition, in which case the already mutilated relief must have been found and re-used at some point after the initial damage.

130 Gell. *NA* 2.10.3: *Id esse cellas quasdam et cisternas quae in area sub terra essent, ubi reponi solerent signa vetera quae ex eo templo collapsa essent, et alia quaedam religiosa e donis consecratis.*

131 Rouse 1902, 346; Donderer 1991/2, 208–9 with an extensive catalogue of examples.

132 Hüssen 2000, 72. cp. Noelke 2007, 307; Bauchhenß and Noelke 1981, 25–6.

133 Allason-Jones and McKay 1985, 12; Allason-Jones 2004, 185.

134 Brown 1998, 649–50; Dioscorus of Alexandria *A Panegyric on Macarius* 5.11. The date of the Coptic text is disputed, purportedly from the mid-fifth century, it may be as late as the 630s. See Johnson 1980, 8–11. A fourth century statue of Zeus and Ganymede was found in a cistern in Carthage in 1977 (Gazda 1981; Stirling 2005, 7–8, 102–14 and passim, fig. 2), while other fragments of statues have been found in reservoirs and cisterns in Scythopolis, the capital of Paelestina Secunda, and elsewhere (Kristensen 2013b, 221).

135 Kousser 2010, 123–7.

136 Berke 2002.

137 Croxford 2003, 81–90.

138 Croxford 2003, 91–2; Shepherd 1998, 228–9.

139 Stahl 1986. A similar interpretation has been applied to a group of late Iron Age chalk figurines from Yorkshire are sometimes discovered damaged or decapitated. See Stead 1988; Aldhouse-Green 2004, 17–18.

140 Davis 1997, 140–1; Eck 1985, 53–5; Mishra 1971, 139–41; Starza 1993, 86–7; Gell 1998, 144–6.

141 Stevanović 1997; Zuckerman 2007; Mock 1998 and Joyce 2003.

142 Gregory the Great *Dialogues* 2.9 and 2.10.

143 Bögli 1975 and 1996, 38–9, fig. 40; Bossert 1983, no. 9, 22–7, pls. 9–14 and 1998, 203, p. 41; Trunk 1991, 173–5. The interpretation of the temple as a capitolium is disputed. It has also been viewed as a temple to Minerva alone, or possibly as a curia with a niche containing the acrolith. For further bibliography see Spickermann 2003, 166–7.

144 Donderer 1991/2, 210–11, no. II.19, fig. 17.

145 Donderer 1991/2, 205, fig. 1; Friese 2007, 236, figs. 6–7; Graeve 1972.

146 Florschütz 1890, 132–4; Noelke 2007, 351–2, cat. no. 24; Czysz 1994, 230–2.

147 On niches in burials see Päffgen 1992, 100. On the dedication of antlers see Heising 2008.

148 Petit 1988 provides an early discussion of wells in Gaul, especially in relation to those excavated at Bliesbruck-Reinheim (Moselle/ Saarland).

149 Baudry and Ballereau 1873; CAG 85.22:76–88 (Provost et al. 1996).

150 Baudry and Ballereau 1873, 199–201.

151 Baudry and Ballereau 1873, 22–9, fig. 2 on p. 27. This piece is now in the Historial de la Vendée in Les-Lucs-sur-Boulogne, Inv. No.EVC 880.1.220.

152 Baudrey and Ballereau 1873, 104, figs. 3–4, and 184, fig. 1.

153 Baudry and Ballereau 1873, 171–81 and 316–31. The child on the goddess's lap crumbled away as the statue was excavated. Baudry and Ballereau recognized the statue as a Romano-Celtic goddess, but were struck by its similarity to medieval depictions of the Virgin Mary.

154 Driard and Deyts 2013, 437.

155 Klein 2003, 114–16, fig. 15, Espérandieu 5881.
156 Bossert 2000, 28; Kaufmann-Heinimann 2009, fig. 5/15, pl. 14.
157 Paus. 6.11.6–8; Cass. Dio 24. 84.2.
158 Joseph. *AJ* 18.65–80. For further examples see *ThesCRA* 2:494–9 (Icard-Gianolio and Szabados, 2004).
159 Steidl 2005, 150, fig. 164.
160 Kaufmann-Heinimann 2007, 208.
161 de Chaisemartin 2001, 239–41, figs. 147 and 165.
162 Merten 1989, Spickermann 2003, 78–9.
163 Gell 1998, 109–16.
164 "Heraiskos" Suda On Line. Translation by C. Roth 2006. www.stoa.org/sol-entries/eta/450.
165 Livy 26.34.12: *Signa, statuas aeneas quae capta de hostibus dicerentur, quae eorum sacra ac profana essent ad pontificum collegium reiecerunt.* (Cp. Chapter 1).
166 Baynes 1960, 119; Bevan 1940, 91–3. On the attraction of spirits to the blood of sacrifices see Origen, *C. Cels.* 8.60; Porph. *Abst.* 2.42–3.
167 Davis 1997, 252–5. The text quoted is from the *Isanasivagurudevapaddhati* (*kriya* 64.1–4), reproduced and translated by Davis, 1997, 253.

CONCLUSION

1 Plut. Marius 26.2; Martin 1987, 103–5. On the archaeology and acrolithic statue Coarelli 1981 (cp. Chapter 4).
2 ἔργα δέ ἐστιν ἁπλᾶ (Paus. 5.17.1).
3 Paus. 5.17.3 The dedications include a statue of Dionysos with ivory hands, feet and face in the treasury of Selinus (6.19.10) and another of composed of ivory (except for the drapery) in the treasury of Metapontum (6.19.11).
4 Boschung 2007, 77.
5 Gell 1998, 115.
6 *De Civ. D.* 4.30.
7 This Roman attitude toward divine relations is famously discussed in Liv. 6.41.8–9.

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